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[List of 1922 meetings](#) of the Central Executive Committee, Polcom, and Orcom of the CPA. Includes specific archival citations for meeting minutes of each session in the Comintern Archive and as well as in the Draper Papers at the Hoover Institution Archive, Stanford University.

UNDATED

[“The Story of the National Defense Committee in New York.”](#) [1922] One of the American Communist movement’s first and most effective mass organizations was the National Defense Committee, an organization that jointly provided legal assistance and financial relief to victims of anti-radical repression conducted by state and federal police authorities in the 1919-1922 period. This is the full text of a pamphlet issued in 1922 in conjunction with a series of fundraising events of the LDC in New York City. It provides interesting detail about a series of legal cases in New York, including those of Ignatz Mizher (CPA); Carl Paivio and Gus Alonen (IWW); Ben Gitlow (CLP); Harry Winitsky (CPA); Jim Larkin (CLP); C.E. Ruthenberg and I.E. Ferguson (UCP); Abram Jakira, Israel Amter, and Edward Lindgren (UCP); Minnie Kalnin, Anna Leisman, and T. Jerson (CPA); Paul Manko (CPA); and deportation operations. The multiparty, civil liberties orientation of the radical NDC should be clear. Particularly noteworthy is the charge made that routine certificates of reasonable doubt, which would have allowed defendants to remain free during the appeals process in the series of novel and virtually unprecedented cases, were systematically denied by the legal authorities, with those convicted sent immediately to prison for lengthy terms. Includes supplemental footnotes detailing the disposition of the various cases.

[“Tentative Program for the Organization of Communist Party Shop Committees.”](#) [A Document of the unified CPA, Circa 1922] The Communist Party of America sought an active position in the workplace from its earliest days. This rare leaflet from the underground CPA in 1922 details a plan for the establishment of “Communist Party Shop Committees” (CPSC). First, an industrial survey of the CPA membership was to be conducted, with information on Occupation, Union affiliation, and Employer gathered—and kept in code with no attached names of party members! This information in hand, the new organizational structure was to be tested. The CPSC were to be groups of no more than five members of the CPA working in the same shop or factory, and were conceived as being parallel and subordinate to the normal organizational structure of groups and branches. The CPSC were to elect their own chairman and to work under the direction of the Local Executive Committee, distributing leaflets and propaganda, organizing educational meetings of reliable workers, building a circle of

sympathizers to assist in the distribution of literature, and acting as a medium of collection of funds for the organization. This latter function was a byproduct of the underground CPA's dire financial situation in 1922: "The regular income from dues, etc. is insufficient even for the upkeep of the organization. As the Communist Party grows in influence and scope new fields of activity are developed requiring more and more funds. The ways and means for collecting funds in an underground organization are necessarily limited. The CPSC can supplement the regular party organization for raising funds directly from the workers in the industries."

JANUARY

"Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, January 1922." [Revised Edition]. A seemingly fragmentary minute of undated January deliberations of the governing Central Executive Committee of the CPA. The CPA was in possession of a Comintern ruling that held "the tactics of the majority of the CEC [on the establishment of a Legal Political Party] to be absolutely correct." Robert Minor had attended the Jan. 7-12, 1922 "Emergency Convention" of the "Communist Party of America" of the Central Caucus faction and read the letter to the convention and again to the leadership of the organization. The three top leaders of the faction—Charles Dirba, George Ashkenuzi, and "Johnson"—had "answered that they will not obey the decision of the Comintern and will fight the [WPA]. They also informed Com. [Minor] that they hold themselves to be the [Communist Party of America]" and that they sent a delegate to Russia to argue their case. As a result, a campaign of publicity was launched and CEC members Bittelman, Zack, and Weinstone were sent on tour of the various districts to publicize the Comintern's decision. The CEC also established a new Party-wide wage scale, based on location, character of work, and number of dependents, ranging from \$25-35 single, \$30-40 one dependent, and \$40-45 for employees with multiple dependents.

Manifesto of the Communist Party of America on the Workers Party: To the Workers of America.[circa January 1922] Text of a rare leaflet of the insurgent ultra-left "Communist Party of America" established by the Central Caucus faction in January 1922. The new Legal Political Party of the mainline CPA, the Workers Party of America, is denounced as "spurious" and a "palpable fraud" consisting of "impostors and charlatans" who make false claims to speak for the Communist International. The leaflet asserts that in contrast to the Workers Party and its orientation towards capitalist electoral politics, "the Communists assert that the exploited masses can only achieve their emancipation from all the horrors of capitalism through mass action which will develop into open armed conflict of the workers against the forces of the capitalist state, resulting in its violent overthrow and destruction, establishing in its place the dictatorship of the proletariat who become the ruling class and exercise their power through the Soviet form of government." The Workers Party is nothing more than "a party of dangerous compromisers, opportunists and centrists, masking themselves as Communists," the leaflet contends.

"For the United Front of the Proletariat: The Call for the First Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, January 1, 1922." The 3rd

Congress of the Communist International (Summer 1921) barely mentioned the tactic of the “United Front.” This was, indeed, a slogan advanced in the aftermath of the Congress, during the run-up to the First Enlarged Plenum of the ECCI— a new institution to which member parties sent double their usual contingent of representation to both increase the range of perspectives heard by the conclave and to improve the transmission of the decisions of the gathering from Moscow to the member parties abroad. This call for the First Enlarged Plenum was an open manifesto, published in the pages of the Communist press around the world. It marked an important change in the line of the CI: instead of a world on the brink of revolution, the Comintern posited a new phase in which regroupment and unification were the order of the day. The manifesto declared frankly to the workers of the world that “you are not yet ready to renew your struggle, you do not yet dare the armed conflict for power, for the dictatorship, you do not yet dare the great attack on the citadels of world reaction. Then at least join forces for the struggle for a bare existence, for the struggle for a bit of bread and peace. Join your forces in a battle front, unite as a proletarian class against the class of the exploiters and pillagers of the world. Tear down the walls which have been built up between you, take your place in the ranks—whether Communist, Social Democrat, Anarchist, or Syndicalist—for the battle against the misery of the hour.” It was stated that the realities of the daily struggle would generate awareness of the necessity for fundamental change: “Only when you, proletarians, in shop and factory so unite, will all parties which rest upon the proletariat and wish to be heeded by it, be compelled to united for a common defensive fight against capitalism.”

“The ‘Workers’ Party,” by Joseph Sharts [Jan. 3, 1922] Announcement of the formation of the Workers Party of America to a Socialist audience by a Socialist observer, as published in the New York Call. Sharts has a righteous laugh at the debacle of the Left Wing Section over the past two years: “Instead of viewing the American situation in a scientific way, as informed Socialists ought, the ‘left wingers’ yielded to emotional impulses. They wanted the Socialist Party, back in 1918, to take a more ‘militant’ attitude. The absurdity of a ‘militant’ attitude on the part of a mere handful of the masses, while the vast majority of American workers are not even class-conscious, didn’t strike them then, and doesn’t strike them now. This new ‘Workers Party’ still peddles the old phrases: ‘militant,’ ‘action,’ etc. Movements do not make themselves militant by slinging ‘militant’ phrases; nor do they get ‘action’ by shrieking ‘action.’ A really militant man, a real fighter, so long as he is not in position to strike, will talk softly, will bide his time; he does not unpack his heart of pompous phrases of war with knowledge that he cannot translate his boasts into action. And this, we think, is the true difference between the Socialist Party and these ‘left wing’ rebels.”

“Foreign Treasury Exchange, January 4, 1922: [A Complete Record of Comintern Subsidies Actually Received by the American Communist Movement, 1919-1921],” by Will Weinstone Davenport footnote: “This is a big one, a Moby Dick of archival documents—a receipt for Comintern funds received by the Executive Secretary of the unified CPA, with no mincing around or obfuscation. These numbers, it should be noted, match the internal evidence of CPA and UCP budget figures presented to the May 1921 Woodstock Unity Convention and represent the sort of significant-yet-comparatively-modest funding that would have allowed the American Communist movement the sort of healthy activity it demonstrated in 1920-21 before running out of funds and nearly going bankrupt in 1922.” And the final answer for the years 1919-1921 is: \$25,000 to the CPA, \$25,000 to the UPA, \$35,000 for the American Agency

(some of which was spent in Canada and Mexico and a significant unspent balance of which was filched by Louis Fraina). Please print this page out on acid free paper and insert it between pages 24 and 25 in your copy of Klehr, Haynes, and Firsov's *The Secret World of American Communism* (1995).

“Historical Timeline of the Central Caucus-CPA (Sept. 17, 1921 to Jan. 6, 1922).” [Jan. 7, 1922] This is an extremely valuable document consisting of short summaries of the results of the weekly sessions of the Central Caucus (the council of representatives of the rebellious wings of 6 language federations of the Communist Party and their officials). It is noted that the Central Caucus was established on Saturday, Sept. 17, 1921 (presumably in New York City), that it had undertaken to organize factional leaders on a district-by-district basis on the following Tuesday, that it had considered and adopted its first factional document, “Statement No. 1,” outlining its grievances on Sept. 27, 1921, and that the appeal of the 3 CEC Members to the Comintern was first read at its Oct. 17 session. The actual organizational break was set in motion at the Nov. 7, 1921 meeting by a narrow 4 to 3 vote, it is revealed, when it was decided “to notify all Districts and Federations that where parts of groups, branches, or sections are raised [forced overground] into LPP, those who are with us an opposed to joining LPP at once organize themselves, elect their own captains, branch organizers, section organizers, etc.; and hold their meetings separately before going into regular underground meeting, in order to maintain the present form of party organization and to prevent the total liquidation of our party.” A call for a “National Conference” of the faction, which ultimately declared itself the “Emergency Convention of the Communist Party of America,” was issued on Nov. 28, 1921, and the decision that membership dues should be paid to the Central Caucus rather than to the CEC of the unified CPA was made December 5, 1921. The National Conference/Emergency Convention was actually held in New York from Jan. 7-12, 1922, it should be noted.

“Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the CPA, January 1922.” Official minutes of what seems to be the only January 1922 session of the regular Communist Party's governing Central Executive Committee. This version expands abbreviations and provides the identities of underground pseudonyms whenever possible, making it relatively easy to interpret the document. Robert Minor noted that the leaders of the Central Caucus faction told him they intended to continue their fight against the legal Workers Party of America, in contradiction of the instructions of the Comintern on the matter. A slightly revised party wage scale was also put into effect for District Organizers and employees of the various Language Federation Bureaus.

“Letter to Louis C. Fraina from William Weinstone in New York.” [Jan. 10, 1922] This short note to representative of the American Agency Louis Fraina repeats and reiterates the text of a cable sent to him that same day, notifying Fraina of the Comintern's decision to liquidate the American Agency and to turn over its remaining funds to the (nearly bankrupt) Communist Party of America—the “regular” party, rather than the Central Caucus-Opposition which was beginning to use the same name. Fraina is instructed to submit a report of his expenditures and to turn over remaining funds. CPA Executive Secretary Weinstone notes that “We sent you a similar wire about 3 or 4 weeks ago when we first received this information, but

it was returned because of removal of address. This is official and final, brought to us from the Main Office [Moscow] by our del. [Robert Minor].”

“From Recent Mails: Report to ECCI No. 1,” by L.E. Katterfeld [Jan. 11th, 1922] Report of the CPA’s representative to the Executive Committee of the Communist International on recent happenings in America. Katterfeld notes the successful formation of the legal Workers Party of America and details the “party controversy” which has erupted over the establishment of this institution. “The CEC of the CP of A, which is responsible for the forming of the new legal party, is not leading the movement into the swamp of liquidation, as the ‘minority’ charges, but has the correct tactics as laid down by the Communist International,” Katterfeld asserts. In addition to routine notes about the freeing of Eugene Debs from prison, the movement to establish an English language daily paper, and the formation of Freiheit, Katterfeld relates the saga of the accusations of Wall Street bomber William Linde. This individual “has made a ‘confession’ to the effect that the Communist Party of America received \$3,000 from the Communist International for attempting to expedite Mr. Morgan of Wall Street into the hereafter with a bomb. In his statement, Linde names ten members of the Communist Party as being the guilty ones. [William] Burns is reported by the papers to maintain that this confession of Linde’s clears up the entire mystery, and that he will soon have the guilty parties under arrest.”

“Constitution of the C.P. of A.: Adopted at the Emergency Convention, January 1922, of the Communist Party of America.” [Central Caucus faction] Basic document of organizational law of the Central Caucus faction’s “Communist Party of America,” established by an “Emergency Convention” held Jan. 7-11, 1922. The document details the complicated underground structure of the group, containing five layers of organizational structure between the individual member and the Central Executive Committee (in ascending order: Groups headed by a Group Captain, Branches headed by a Branch Organizer, Sections headed by a Section Organizer as part of a Section Executive Committee, Sub-districts headed by a Sub-district Organizer as part of a Sub-district Executive Committee, Districts headed by a District Organizer as part of the District Executive Committee). In addition to this extensive structure was placed a parallel Language Federation structure. It should be noted that the same basic model was used in the “regular” CPA during this period.

“Provisions for the Organization of Communist Party Nuclei in the Shops and Unions.” [Central Caucus faction] This document was produced by the Central Caucus faction’s CEC as a sort of appendix to the Constitution of the Central Caucus faction’s “Communist Party of America.” A third parallel organizational structure—based on structured arrangement of party organizations in the workplace—was thereby established, joining the geographic-based and language-based apparati already in place. A National Industrial Department was to be established, under which District Industrial Organizers elected by the District Executive Committees were to serve. Under these committees were also to be Section or Sub-district Industrial Departments, if necessary, these in turn organizing party members in shop nuclei of “about 10 members” each, each of which was to elect a captain. The nuclei captains were to get together with Nuclei union Organizers which they elected to form a Nuclei Committee in their respective union local or shop.

“Report No. 8 to Will Weinstone et al. in New York from Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow, Jan. 16, 1922” Brief and routine report from the CPA’s representative to the ECCI on Moscow events, noting the safe receipt of documents travelling with Max Bedacht, an ongoing effort to employ a new female Moscow correspondent for the Federated Press, and an instruction to make International Women’s Day (Feb. 8) the focus of a major propaganda campaign. The fact that the party did not follow CI instructions to hold a convention of the underground CPA prior to the founding of the legal WPA “cannot now be helped,” Katterfeld observes, “but it makes it all the more essential for you to observe all the regulations that have been laid here at headquarters for our general sales campaign.” Katterfeld incidentally provides a future codebreaker with an important clue towards solving the CPA’s “heavy code” when he asks that “21212121” be used as the “figure system” instead of the previously agreed upon “14321432.”

“From Recent Mails: Report to ECCI No. 2,” by L.E. Katterfeld [Jan. 18, 1922].” Periodic report by the CPA’s representative to ECCI to his colleagues on ongoing events in America. Katterfeld reports the arrival of Max Bedacht in Moscow on Famine Relief and Party business and the safe arrival of Robert Minor in the United States. He notes the controversy in America over the Nuorteva case, documents the achievements of the Friends of Soviet Russia in raising funds and in-kind contributions for Russian famine relief, and comments upon the controversy within the IWW over that organization’s position towards the Comintern and the Red International of Labor Unions in the wake of that organization’s bitter disavowal of the Moscow-based organizations.

“Statement to the Communist International Issued to John J. Ballam [“John Moore”] by the CEC of the Central Caucus Faction’s Communist Party of America, Jan. 22, 1922.” This document prepared for the Executive Committee of the Communist International outlines the rationale behind the split of the Central Caucus faction from the regular Communist Party of America. The insurgents represented themselves as the continuers of the old CPA, the United Communist Party, and the unified CPA, depicting their Jan. 7-12, 1922 Convention as an “Emergency Convention” that was part of an unbroken series. The regular CPA’s position on the Legal Political Party, the Workers Party of America, is presented as the sole reason for the split. A series of charges are made. According to this document, the regular CPA had (1) engaged in secret negotiations with “certain groups who had recently left the Socialist Party” without informing the minority members of the CED; (2) had refused to call a special convention of the party to determine the question; (3) had suspended and disconnected 3,000 members without hearing, in violation of party and Comintern rules; (4) had suspend the CEC minority (Dirba, Ballam, Ashkenuzi) in violation of the party constitution. The Workers Party is held to be “not the legal political machinery of the CP of A under the control and discipline of the illegal party.” Rather, CPA members were said to have been “absorbed” within the “centrist” WPA. Not more than 3,000 CPA members are said to have joined the WPA, 2,000 remained aloof, and another 5,000 had cast their lot with the Central Caucus’ “Communist Party of America,” which Ballam represented. “All members of the CP of A who have joined the Workers Party have left the Communist Party, which according to its constitution adopted at the Joint Unity Convention, held May 1921, prohibits the members of the CP of A from joining or being members of any other political party or organization,” the statement declares.

“Report No. 9 to Will Weinstone et al. in New York from Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow, Jan. 22, 1922.” A brief and routine update on events in Moscow written by the CI Rep to Executive Secretary Weinstone and his colleagues: the CPA convention needs to be held after May 1 to allow CI’s decision on the Central Caucus faction split to be publicized; Friends of Soviet Russia are to receive communications direct and the unidentified “Dub” is to keep hands off; an inquiry had been received from Finnish-American communists inquiring as to the fate of Santeri Nuorteva, about which information would be available from ECCI shortly; March 8 was to be International Women’s Day; the ECCI decision on the Central Caucus split carried home by Robert Minor was to be regarded as final; the IWWs in Moscow were angry at the recent change of line of their organization towards the communist movement; and Nicholas Hourwich had been booted from Room 300, causing great mirth and rejoicing.

“Memo to the Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow from Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow, Jan. 25, 1922.” Text of two cables from Executive Secretary Will Weinstone of the Communist Party of America with recommendations for action by the CPA’s representative to the Comintern. Cable 1 notes the disappearance of Louis Fraina—“Left for Argentina. Rejects orders, refuses accounts. Instruct Argentine Party to help trace him for us.” It also asks for rapid transmission of \$10,000 to free C.E. Ruthenberg and I.E. Ferguson on bail. Cable 2 explains that it was impossible to postpone the founding convention of the Workers Party of America until after a convention of the underground CPA dues to the 11th hour receipt of the instruction to do this. “Those joining new Party would have rejected delay necessary to give us time to prepare and hold underground convention. They would have proceeded with their own incorporation,” Weinstone notes, adding that the CPA’s delegates to the convention were the “most trusted, active members,” who had “in preliminary conference decided all points of program and constitution adopted at open convention.” Katterfeld recommends to ECCI that a cable be sent to the Argentine Communist Party asking for assistance with Fraina.

FEBRUARY

“Emergency Convention: The Fifth Convention of the Communist Party of America.” [Central Caucus faction—Jan. 1922] From Jan. 7-11, the Central Caucus Faction of Ballam/Ashkenudzie/Dirba held an “Emergency Convention of the Communist Party of America,” attended by 20 delegates and 18 fraternal delegates. Over this five day interval, the group heard a series of reports on the status of the organization, including a reading of confidential letters of the Comintern by Robert Minor on behalf of the CPA majority group. The group made plans for participation in legal political activities on their own and adopted an extensively revised constitution, in addition to electing a 7 member Central Executive Committee, along with other organizational officers. This is a lengthy account of the Emergency Convention published in the official press for members of the Central Caucus Faction (which called itself “Communist Party of America, Section of the Communist International,” just like the majority group of the party).

“Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, New York, [Feb. 10-22, 1922] ***Substantially modified file— adds one missed page of content, adds several pseudonym IDs, removes one false ID, standardizes format, alters typography.*** Official minutes from the February 1922 sessions of the Communist Party’s governing Central Executive Committee— some pages missing from the source document in the Comintern archive. A variety of interesting tidbits: the balance of his funds owed the American CP by Louis Fraina (\$15,666); decision-making as to participation in the founding conclave of the Conference for Progressive Political Action (three delegates sent with a declaration that the Workers Party is a revolutionary organization not believing in reforms); a decision TO INSTRUCT THE COMINTERN to in turn INSTRUCT THE CENTRAL CAUCUS OPPOSITION GROUP IN THE NAME OF THE COMINTERN that failure to return to the CPA within a designated period will result in expulsion from the Communist International itself; and the resignation of William Weinstone as Executive Secretary of the CPA on Feb. 22, 1922, and his replacement in that role by Jay Lovestone. // Material added in the 2007 edition covers additional happenings from the Feb. 22 session: the rebuking of a protest levied by the New York District against Jim Cannon; resignation of Meyer Lunin as Detroit DO, replaced by “Dare”; and a first vote on the expulsion of Ludwig Lore from the party, with Joseph Zack Kornfeder bringing the motion and casting the sole vote in favor.

“Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the CPA, February 10, 13, 14, 15, 19, 22, 1922.” Official minutes from the February 1922 sessions of the Communist Party’s governing Central Executive Committee—some pages missing from the source document in the Comintern archive. A variety of interesting tidbits: the balance of his funds owed the American CP by Louis Fraina (\$15,666); decision-making as to participation in the founding conclave of the Conference for Progressive Political Action (three delegates sent with a declaration that the Workers Party is a revolutionary organization not believing in reforms); a decision TO INSTRUCT THE COMINTERN to in turn INSTRUCT THE CENTRAL CAUCUS OPPOSITION GROUP IN THE NAME OF THE COMINTERN that failure to return to the CPA within a designated period will result in expulsion from the Communist International itself; and the resignation of William Weinstone as Executive Secretary of the CPA on Feb. 22, 1922, and his replacement in that role by Jay Lovestone. This version expands abbreviations and provides the identities of underground pseudonyms and code slang whenever possible, making it relatively easy for casual users to interpret the document.

“A Christmas Party,” by Max Eastman. [Feb. 1922]The above-ground (“legal”) Workers Party of America was established at a founding convention which opened in New York City on Christmas Day, 1921. *Liberator* editor Max Eastman was on hand for the festivities, turning in this piece of eyewitness reportage. Eastman is enthusiastic for the new organization, calling it “much more mature and confident than any previous assemblage of its kind in this country.” He noted that two years earlier a theoretical challenge such as that made by the two fraternal delegates of the Proletarian Party, Dennis Batt and Harry Wicks, “would have struck fire and split the convention in forty places. Large blocks of earnest young Bolsheviks of the “hyperthyroid” type would have withdrawn to closet themselves for forty hours’ debate in caucus, while the American working class waited breathlessly to learn who were to be its

leaders in the revolution. Today almost everyone seemed to realize that the American working class will not pay any attention to a debating society, and that the leaders will be those who occupy themselves with organization, propaganda, and action in the current struggle.” Eastman expounds at length on the choice facing Eugene Debs—to join and lend the new organization his prestige or to do likewise in the quest for a new organization uniting liberals and the farmer-labor movement in a short-lived transitional reformist political organization. This version includes a Boardman Robinson drawing, “Hail, the Workers Party!” from the same issue of *The Liberator*.

“The Situation in the Lithuanian Federation” by Joseph Stilson [Feb. 1922] The split of the Central Caucus faction, centered in 5 of the 6 Language Federations of the old CPA, dealt a devastating financial blow to the already precarious budget of the unified Communist Party of America. Largest of the Communist language organizations in 1921 was the Lithuanian language group, which exited at the end of November behind the leadership of the as-yet unidentified “Leon” and “Zemotis.” This account by the highest-ranking Lithuanian-American on the Central Executive Committee of the CPA details the struggle to win back the bolting Lithuanian Federations to the party. Stilson (“Riley”) says that the task began with the meeting of about 14 loyalist leaders in New York (presumably in December 1921). Utterly without funds and paying their traveling expenses out of pocket, a group of Lithuanian organizers from this reorganized “Federation Bureau” spread across the Eastern US, addressing Lithuanian branches. The Philadelphia District of the Lithuanian Federation (home base of the Federation organization) was the first to reaffiliate with the majority CPA, according to Stilson; thereafter, other Districts began to fall back into line. At the time of the writing, the pivotal New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago districts had all declared themselves behind the CPA majority (as well as 3 smaller districts). In Buffalo the majority CPA had a clear majority, while the Central Caucus and the CPA majority split the Detroit district. The Central Caucus’ support was based in Boston, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland, according to Stilson, including “the most backward localities.” Stilson identifies three social groups behind the Central Caucus: (1) several leaders who lost their positions on account of reorganization of the Language Bureau; (2) a few excitable would-be leaders intent on shouting about the need for armed insurrection “t every nook and corner”; (3) “working men who have the best of intentions but lack the understanding of even the primary aspects of the class struggle.” Stilson remarks that “the latter, for obvious reasons, can very well be led by any phrase revolutionary.”

“Decision by the Communist International” by Robert Minor [Feb. 1922] Robert Minor, formerly the representative of the CPA to the Comintern in Moscow, carried home a 10-page Comintern document dated Dec. 8, 1921 ruling in favor of the CEC majority group with regards to the immediate formation of a Legal Political Party and instructing the Central Caucus faction minority to rejoin the party. This document was read by Minor to the “Emergency Convention” of the Central Caucus’ “Communist Party of America” held in New York from Jan. 7-12, 1922. Contrary to the expectations of Minor and the majority CPA leadership, the minority CPA did not roll over on the issue, but continued its factional struggle, continuing to characterize itself as the genuine American section of the Communist International in America and issuing a look-alike official organ bore the same organizational logo and continued the same issue numbering system. This was the angry response of the CPA majority, published in the pages of its own official organ. After studying the CI’s ruling, the leadership group of the Central

Caucus-CPA “have used that opportunity for nothing further than to spread the most outrageous falsehoods,” charges Minor, adding that these leaders had “the dishonesty to issue a forged edition of the official organ of the party, containing evasive language intended to make the party members think that the Comintern upholds their position.” While not permitted to publish the Comintern’s ruling verbatim, Minor quotes excerpts at length to prove that the CI was fully cognizant of the CEC’s rapid move to establish a Legal Political Party without first holding an emergency convention of the CPA to moot the issue. On the other hand, Minor states, “a certain element in the Party membership will inevitably forget” the inevitability of violent class struggle and will thus “come forward with naive proposals for the liquidation of the illegal machinery of the Party.” This was a dangerous tendency, he noted, adding that “the actual liquidation of the underground Party would mean the liquidation of the revolutionary movement. Party members who persist in such a view must be ruthlessly expelled from the illegal Party.”

“Letter to Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow from Executive Secretary Will Weinstone in New York, Feb. 2, 1922” Letter from the Executive Secretary of the CPA to the party’s representative on the ECCI, Ludwig Katterfeld. Weinstone expresses his regret that the Workers Party of America Founding convention was held in December rather than postponed to February in accord with Comintern instructions. “Had we not held our [convention] then our new partners would have formed a [legal party] of their own,” Weinstone states, adding that the financial drain associated with formation of the new WPA has been “very heavy.” Weinstone states that the three leaders of the Central Caucus faction who left the CEC — John Ballam, Charles Dirba, and George Ashkenuzi — had been informed of the Comintern’s decision on the faction fight. “They flatly refused to comply, decided to call themselves the real CP of A” and were even speaking of making a move on the Friends of Soviet Russia organization. Weinstone notes in code that George Ashkenuzi had been dispatched for Moscow to argue the group’s case — an event which is previously unreported in the historical literature. Weinstone notes the dire financial condition of the CPA, impacting particularly the publishing endeavors of the Yiddish-language federation and the ability to pay the salaries of District Organizers. He notes additionally the refusal of Louis Fraina to acknowledge Comintern instructions to surrender his funds to the CPA, but instead “we are informed that he has left for the Argentine.”

“Letter to L.E. Katterfeld in Moscow from Jay Lovestone in New York” [fragment] [Feb. 11, 1922] An intriguing (albeit esoteric) section of a communication from Executive Secretary Jay Lovestone to the CPA’s Rep on ECCI, Ludwig Katterfeld (last page missing). Lovestone notes a security breach in the underground CPA’s communication channels: “The enemy [DoJ] has succeeded in breaking through our service in sectors 6 [Detroit] and 11 [Pittsburgh]. In the former our chief sales agent is taking a vacation in order to save himself from hospital treatment. In the latter our man is actually tied up in the enemy’s camp. We have a hard sale ahead of us here. One of our local sales agents is suspected. He has as a result been disconnected from our firm.” The reference to Pittsburgh seems to indicate that the Department of Justice’s mole who had been instrumental in the 1921 raid on UCP headquarters and who had served as a delegate at the May 1921 Woodstock Convention, party name “Ryan,” had been identified as such. On the other hand, the known personnel change in this period, the replacement of Pittsburgh DO “James Curley” by African Blood Brotherhood member “Robert Bruce,” indicates that the CPA may have purged the wrong

individual, circumstantial evidence indicating that “Curley” was not “Ryan.” This message also confirms a charge levied by the Central Caucus-Opposition that the regular CPA had withdrawn and destroyed the Jan. 1922 issue of its official organ, eventually replacing this issue “#6” with a “#6/7” dated Feb.-March 1922. The recalled issue #6, never distributed to the general membership, seems to be a bibliographical rarity—although at least one copy was sent to Moscow and might have survived. (It is not among the run filmed by Harvard University or in the run in the Davenport collection.)

“Open Letter to the Conference Called by the Authorized Committee of the 16 Standard Railroad Labor Organizations from the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America.” [c. Feb. 20, 1922]

Published letter to the forthcoming first Conference for Progressive Political Action in Chicago, probably written by Workers Party of America Chairman James P. Cannon. The open letter formally calls for a “United Front of Labor, politically and industrially,” but aggressively challenges the orientation of the forthcoming conference, declaring “Those who would form a ‘front of Labor’ together with sections of the privileged classes are making sure that no privileges will be abolished. Only with the toilers of the farm—with the farm laborer and the rent-ridden, mortgage-ridden small farmer—can the working class strike hands.” The WPA open letter asserts that “We do not believe that the social or political maladjustments can be remedied by mere reforms in the manner of exploiting Labor, but only by the complete abolition of the system of Labor exploitation. We believe that this can only be done with revolutionary struggle, through the establishment of the Workers’ Republic. In regard to this goal and this method, we have no compromises to offer and no illusions of any willingness of those who initiated this Conference to compromise in our direction.” Chambers of Commerce, business groups, and manufacturer’s associations had joined in “a veritable Ku Klux Klan of Capitalism,” the open letter declares, adding “we hold that it would be nothing short of criminal betrayal of the working class to suggest that the condition can be met by any instrument less than a complete mobilization of all of Labor, industrially and politically.” United action on a limited set of objectives in which constituent political organizations would retain their right to put forward their own programs and retain the right to criticize others is prescribed by the open letter.

“Our Next Step,” by Jay Lovestone. [Feb. 1922] This fascinating document was written immediately prior to the founding meeting of the Conference for Progressive Political Action by Jay Lovestone for the official organ of the new “legal political party,” the Workers Party of America (Lovestone was made Executive Secretary of the underground Communist Party of America that same week). It may be regarded as an authoritative exposition of Communist thinking about the forthcoming CPPA. Lovestone argued that the Conference offered the WPA “an opportunity of joining with large sections of the workers in the immediate struggle” as part of the united front against the capitalist foe. The demand for common action was growing in the ranks of labor, Lovestone believed, and the fact that the WPA had not been invited to the conference “does not matter a straw.” “We should not stand on ceremony and refuse to participate in any conference where representatives of the workers are found,” Lovestone stated, arguing that if the WPA was denied from the assembly, the falsity of the CPPA’s unity claim could be conclusively proven to the working class, while if they were admitted, the opportunity for airing the organization’s program and advancing effective slogans would present itself. The CPPA’s declared intent not to establish a Labor Party in America would give

fuel to the WPA's objective of constructing "genuine Labor Party along federative lines and modeled after the British Labour Party."

MARCH

Circular Letter to All District Organizers of the Workers Party of America from James P. Cannon, Chairman. [March 4, 1922] Short snippet illustrating the organizational incompetence of the Workers Party of America first few months of existence, under the organizational administration of James P. Cannon and Caleb Harrison. On March 4, after more than two months of nominal existence, charter certificates were almost ready to be sent to District Organizers, Cannon notes here. An engravers' strike was blamed. Upon assuming the reins of the organization in May 1921, after his release from Sing Sing Penitentiary on bail, pending appeal, C.E. Ruthenberg was rather aghast at the slap dash dues collections and haphazard record keeping of the WPA during its first 4 months of existence. This perspective may well have been factual rather than factional, documents such as this one illustrate.

"Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, March 1922." An apparently complete set of minutes of the governing CEC of the underground CPA for the month of March 1922. The body met 8 times during the month and dealt with a wide range of topics. Highlights include: (A) decision to circulate a photostatic copy of the Comintern letter resolving the Central Caucus faction split in favor of the CPA majority (3/8), (B) declaration by Executive Secretary Jay Lovestone that "the treasury is totally empty, that the needs were pressing, no funds coming in from the districts and that the outlook for improvement was very dark." (3/8); (C) appointment of Morris Kushinsky as the Philadelphia District Organizer (3/8); (D) an attempt to name Abram Jakira the Detroit DO (3/8), which was rejected by Jakira. The CEC then demanded a letter of explanation (3/14). Jakira continued to strenuously object and the CEC resolved to establish a voluntary (unpaid) DO for the district (3/23). Further tidbits: (E) Rep to the CI Katterfeld in Moscow was instructed to "try to secure an appropriation of at least 25 [thousand dollars]" (3/10); (F) a per capita convention assessment of \$1 was levied to support the forthcoming 2nd Convention of the CPA and a 1-for-200 members representation agree upon ((3/10); (G) Katterfeld recalled from Moscow, to be replaced by Bedacht (3/10); (H) a forthcoming miners' strike was prepared for (3/14 and passim); (I) division of work in writing the theses for the 2nd [Bridgman] convention was made (3/16); (J) an attempt to censure Bittelman for editorial misconduct failed and Minor and Cannon resigned from the Editorial Board in protest — Bittelman also attempted to resign, but his resignation was rejected on a tie vote (3/16); and (K) Joseph Zack Kornfeder and Joseph Stilson were appointed as a committee to investigate and reorganize the CPA's Russian and Jewish Bureaus (3/23, 3/29).

"Letter to L.E. Katterfeld in Moscow from Jay Lovestone in New York, March 7, 1922." A fascinating glimpse at the Communist Party of America at the moment of its greatest weakness in numerical and economic terms. The Communist Party of America was shaken financially by the departure of about 2,000 of its members and saw its paltry resources further stretched by the recent decision to launch a parallel legal party apparatus and a new trade

union organization, resulting in extraordinary startup expenses and a further reduced revenue stream. Jay Lovestone seems to have taken over the task of Executive Secretary from William Weinstone in this period, and he outlines the problem to the CPA's representative to the Communist International in Moscow, Ludwig Katterfeld: "There is today not one cent in the Treasury and there is no outlook for getting a penny.... Wages have been reduced and expenses have been cut down all along the line. We are today faced with a situation where there is actually no money to pay anyone wages." A wealthy party swimming in "Moscow gold" it was not, this document demonstrates.

"Report No. 11 to Jay Lovestone et al. in New York from Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow, March 13, 1922." The CPA's man in Moscow notes the arrival of John Ballam on behalf of the Central Caucus faction on March 12, 1922. Katterfeld states that he was "undergoing a process of disillusionment as he meets one after another of his old cronies and friends. I think he received the surprise of his young life when he discovered that I had not been fired and shipped home by Marshall [Max Bedacht] as he expected, but found us living amicably together in Hourwich's old castle," The ECCI was about to resolve the Central Caucus split in favor of the CPA majority, Katterfeld believed, and anticipated details were outlined in this letter to help clarify the forthcoming cable on the matter, to be sent after final decision was rendered. A Ukrainian comrade was being dispatched to help win the Ukrainian elements in the Central Caucus faction back to the party, Katterfeld noted.

"Letter to the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America from C.E. Ruthenberg in Ossining, NY, March 14, 1922." by Letter from imprisoned Communist leader C.E. Ruthenberg to the governing CEC of the Communist Party of America explicitly exonerating the actions of Jay Lovestone in his decision to testify (under compulsion) in the trial of Harry Winitsky in 1920. "At first it was thought that certain legal provisions would relieve them from any responsibility and make their appearance unnecessary, but while the matter was pending the state legislature changed the situation by amending the law covering it," Ruthenberg states. Citing a previous decision of the CEC on a similar matter, Ruthenberg declares that "I personally gave instructions to Lovestone and Ferguson to make an appearance and also telephoned Rose Stokes, giving her the same instructions." At a subsequent investigation of this matter by the CEC, Ruthenberg indicates that "I assumed all responsibility for Comrade Lovestone having appeared, citing as my authority the previous ruling of the Executive Committee.... Comrade Lovestone was exonerated from all responsibility for his appearance, leaving open only the question of what he said." Ruthenberg cites his associate I.E. Ferguson, a lawyer who was also present at the proceedings and who later studied the transcript of the trial, who declared to Ruthenberg that "there is nothing that Comrade Lovestone said that was not already a part of the proceedings and that nothing he said could have been of any material effect in influencing the outcome."

Letter to the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America in New York from Abram Jakira in New York, March 18, 1922." In February of 1922 the Detroit District Organizer of the unified CPA resigned his position so that he might more easily participate in sessions of the Central Executive Committee. The CEC named Goose Caucus

leader Abram Jakira to the position of Detroit DO, a move which Jakira saw as a factional maneuver to remove him from the New York area in the run up to the forthcoming Second Convention of the party (Bridgman, MI—August). The CEC demanded compliance from Jakira at a meeting in March, to which he responded with this letter to the CEC a few days later. “You are fully aware of my opinion regarding the tactics used by you—tactics that have led to a complete break up of the Party, that are destroying the #2 [Workers Party of America].... It is true that Party Discipline demands of every Party member to defend the policies of the CEC even if he does not agree with them. But you must realize that it is absurd to appoint a comrade with my opinions about the personnel, activities, and conduct of your committee as your sole representative in the District,” Jakira writes, noting that it was only after he began local political activity in New York that he was to be assigned to Detroit—paralleling a similar maneuver to remove him from the Russian Bureau by naming him DO of the Buffalo district sometime earlier.

“The United Front of Labor,” by William W. Weinstone. [March 18, 1922] William W. Weinstone was the Executive Secretary of the underground Communist Party of America [majority faction] from Oct. 15, 1921, to Feb. 22, 1922—about a month before this article was written for the weekly newspaper of the legal Workers Party of America. Weinstone recounts the history of the United Front policy, noting explicitly that it was a tactic originating with Lenin and the Second Congress of the Comintern. The expression of the tactic in the United States should take the form of a “United Political Front of Labor on somewhat the model of the British Labour Party—the identity of the uniting bodies to be unaffected; their autonomy of organization and full freedom of criticism retained,” Weinstone argued. He noted that such an organizational form would unite the currently disconnected “advance guard” of the working class (the Communists) with the main body of the American working class and would provide fertile ground for winning workers to the program of the Communists. The current onslaught of the capitalists to roll back the gains of the working class in length of the workday, wage rates, and the right to organize were creating pressure within the labor movement for unity. The “United Front of Labor” would accord with this growing sentiment and give the movement’s revolutionary wing a chance to unmask the “reformists” as “false leaders unwilling to fight for the simple, elementary needs of the workers” and “of being the real split-makers dividing the workers for their bureaucratic interests,” Weinstone asserted.

“Letter of Protest to ECCI from John J. Ballam [“John Moore”], Special Representative of the Central Caucus Faction’s CPA, March 18, 1922.” John Ballam’s arrival in Moscow to argue the case of the Central Caucus faction’s “Communist Party of America” before the Executive Committee of the Comintern was not met with open arms, prompting Ballam to pen this letter of protest. “These comrades in America sent me to the EC of the CI expecting to obtain at least a complete and thorough hearing and investigation of the causes and incidents leading up to the present deplorable situation in the American Communist movement. At the instigation of Comrades Carr [Ludwig Katterfeld] and Marshall [Max Bedacht] the proceedings of the commission appointed by the EC to report upon the American situation were hurried and the investigation far from satisfactory. There was no stenographer present and no adequate interpreter. From my observation the commission kept no records and called no witnesses. I had no opportunity to present documents...” Ballam declares. “If the EC of the CI wishes to support Comrade Carr [Katterfeld] and his friends in the face of a growing and

determined opposition not only among the comrades who have given me their mandate to represent them, but also among the faction directly represented by Carr [Katterfeld] and Marshall [Bedacht] the consequences will rest squarely upon the EC,” Ballam brashly warns. “We demand from the Comintern adequate guarantees that our membership rights shall not be violated, and cannot yield, under the circumstances, unless such guarantees are provided,” Ballam insists, adding that a thorough investigation of the American inner-party situation is called for.

“Testimony to the Executive Committee of the Communist International, March 18, 1922,” by John J. Ballam John Ballam’s heated letter of protest to ECCI on behalf of the Central Caucus faction seems to have been the cause for an immediate Executive Session of the American Commission, during which the Ballam was probably taken to the proverbial woodshed. This stenographic document, regrettably limited to Ballam’s comments, shows Ballam as a defiant loser of the factional war mediated by the CI. “The Executive Committee seems to be determined that we must go back without guarantees as to our membership rights, that I must go back and insist on the waiving of these rights. I will not do so. We will not join the Fourth International. We will not join the Second International, nor the Two-and-a-Half International. We will stay outside the Communist International, if we must, and we will fight, but within one year the Communist International will recognize the Communist Party of America that I represent, or they will recognize nobody. The Workers Party, as at present led, will not last one year. Its divergent elements pulling against each other in all directions will split it in pieces without any assistance from us,” Ballam declares. Ballam accuses the regular CPA of undergoing liquidation in the process of attempting to organize the WPA.

“Report No. 12 to Jay Lovestone et al. in New York from Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow, March 19, 1922.” This communique from CI Rep Katterfeld notes the decision in favor of the CPA majority in the faction fight with the Central Caucus faction. The minority is to be allowed a two months’ grace period to return to the ranks of the party without penalty, Katterfeld notes. Given this fact and allowing time for the multi-level election process, Katterfeld states that the forthcoming convention will need to be moved back to September (although it was ultimately held in the second half of August). Katterfeld urges a moderate tone in the move to reintegrate the Central Caucus defectors: “The decision is so strong in our favor that I believe it will be good tactics for you to adopt a very conciliatory tone in the letter that you send out with this decision... From the defiant tone adopted here by Johnny [Ballam] I conclude that they will attempt to buck the inevitable, and that it is your task, with cool heads, to win access to their membership, convey the truth to them, and bring them into our house.” Katterfeld notes his forthcoming participation in the conference of the executive committees of the 3 internationals at Berlin and makes a recommendation to move paid party workers out of the FSR relief effort so that they might work more completely for the CPA and the WPA.

“Letter to Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow from Jay Lovestone in New York, March 21, 1922.” This letter from Executive Secretary Lovestone to CI Rep Katterfeld in Moscow notes the decision of the CEC of the CPA for Katterfeld to return to the United States to attend the 2nd Convention of the party. The CPA is unable to locate Louis Fraina, who is said to be in

Argentina—Lovestone asks Katterfeld to have the Comintern tell the Argentine Party to get Fraina to leave the country or comply with his instructions. The struggle with the Central Caucus faction continues unabated, Lovestone notes, with pressure being put on by the Central Caucus for representation on the board of the Friends of Soviet Russia “on the threat of spreading misinformation which will give away our best workers and break up the whole relief show.” Gene Debs is reported to have regretted his errors, but any trip by him to Soviet Russia is dismissed by Lovestone as speculation. Lovestone again emphasizes the dire financial straights of the CPA: “Rush help and rush it at once. You can’t be too soon,” he pleads.

“Letter to Grigorii Zinoviev in Moscow from John Ballam [“John Moore”] in Moscow in Regard to the American Situation, March 24, 1922.” Less than a week after his defiant performance before a session of the American Commission of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Central Caucus faction representative in Moscow John Ballam had thought better of his strategy of threats and bluster, as this note to the President of ECCI demonstrates. Now, Ballam was amenable to compromise, if not quite contrite: “In the interests of the Communist movement in America I am prepared to agree to the disbanding of the faction which I represent and to work for the policies of the Comintern, which, as a soldier in the revolutionary ranks I cannot oppose,” he writes. A set of policies is proposed by Ballam “in order to protect these comrades in their membership rights; and to avoid the danger of further disagreement and splits.” These suggestions include the appointment of a 3 person commission to attend all meetings of the Central Executive Committee of the reunified party—with voice but not vote—the commission to consist of Ludwig Katterfeld of the regular CPA, Ballam of the Central Caucus faction’s CPA, and a mutually agreed-upon representative. The commission of 3 was to have access to all books and records of the party, including the list of contacts in the localities. Mikhail Borodin is proposed by Ballam as the decisive third member, with Ballam adding that he had met with Borodin and Borodin had agreed to accept the assignment. The commission was to study the American party situation and to make a thorough report to the Comintern. In addition, Ballam strongly suggested the convocation of a convention of the reunified party, with the call issued within 30 days of factional unity and the convention itself to be held within 30 days of the call. (This latter suggestion seems to have been followed, with the Bridgman Michigan unity convention taking place just under 60 days after the June 25 formal date of reunification.)

“Cable to the Central Caucus Faction’s Communist Party of America in New York from John J. Ballam [“Moore”] in Moscow, March 27, 1922.” Text of a terse cable for the Central Caucus faction’s man in Moscow, John Ballam, to his party comrades in New York announcing that an end to the factional controversy had been brokered before the Executive Committee of the Comintern. Ballam states that the Central Caucus faction’s CPA should stop all competition with and attacks upon the regular organization. Ballam indicates as well that a representative is coming from ECCI. Under terms of the deal, the rights of all opposition members are to be guaranteed at an upcoming convention, Ballam notes, adding that “our [faction] must obey decision of [the Comintern] or [be expelled].”

“Report No. 13 to Jay Lovestone et al. in New York from Ludwig Katterfeld in

Moscow, March 27, 1922.” This communication from the CPA’s man in Moscow, Ludwig Katterfeld, details the situation with regards to the Central Caucus faction. Although Katterfeld states that he is “stuck here for a few days longer like an ocean liner on a sandbar” due to John Ballam’s documents failing to have arrived, the decision against the Central Caucus faction “has already been definitely adopted” by the full ECCI and the fate of the faction fight is sealed. Budgetary figures for the coming year are provided, although the exact amount of the 5-figure appropriation from the CI for the coming year is given in code; a 4-figure appropriation from the Profintern for American work (exact amount also coded) was also won by Katterfeld. “ I am told that in contradistinction to other years, this year the amount appropriated will really be paid,” he remarks—something scholars should bear in mind: just because funds were appropriated, it does not necessarily follow that they were either disbursed or received. Katterfeld notes that the Communist Party of Canada was zeroed out in the coming budget period due to the Comintern’s tough financial situation and he asks for consideration for the Canadian party in the CPA’s budget for the coming year. Finally, a new well-known correspondent for the Federated Press has been employed, while the former female correspondent is returning home, Katterfeld notes.

“Report on Visit to Eugene V. Debs of March 25, 1922,” by “Jack Travis.” Following Eugene Debs’ Christmas 1921 release from federal prison, a struggle broke out between the Socialist Party and the various Communist factions to win his valuable endorsement in the factional struggle. A CPA member using the pseudonym “Jack Travis” went to Terre Haute and met with him on March 25, 1922, and reported back to his comrades two days later with the results of the meeting. Debs made his recurrent pitch for party unity, felt that both sides shared blame for the split of the the American movement, expressed no taste for minority rule and less for following orders from “a maniac like [Zinoviev].” A meeting with William Z. Foster was already on the horizon and no meeting with a more formal delegation of the CPA would take place before that occurred. Debs expressed a strong desire to go to Russia and “Travis” felt that such a trip would be the most important step that could be taken in winning Debs’ support of the CPA.

“Declaration Resolving the American Situation by L.E. Katterfeld [“Carr”] for the Communist Party of America (Majority) and John J. Ballam [“Moore”] for the Minority Group, March 29, 1922.” ***NEW EDITION—STANDARDIZES TYPOGRAPHY AND ADDS NAME OF A CI SIGNATORY (RAKOSI)*** John Ballam was elected by the Central Caucus faction-CPA’s Emergency Convention of Jan. 7-12, 1922 as an international delegate to the Comintern, where he traveled to state his group’s position in the bitter factional controversy. Ballam was met with a stinging rebuke from the American Commission of the ECCI which saw the regular CPA’s establishment of a Legal Political Party to be in tune with the directives of the 3rd Wold Congress of the Comintern and the Central Caucus’ secession to be destructive and undisciplined. Ballam soon acclimated himself to the situation in Moscow and as a disciplined adherent of the Comintern, was won over to the CI’s perspective. This document details the process for reunification—a halt to issuance of printed propaganda by the Central Caucus faction, members to rejoin the regular party without discrimination within 60 days, all of the Central Caucus faction’s property and records to be turned over to the CPA majority group.

When he got home, Ballam's agreement was immediately scrapped by the Central Caucus faction, who continued the factional strife up to the ill-starred Bridgman, Michigan unity convention in August.

“To the Communist Party of America: A Communique from the Executive Committee of the Communist International, March 30, 1922.” This document was the cover letter for a 10 point decision of the ECCI on the American factional situation, specifically the split of the Central Caucus faction of Dirba, Ballam, and Ashkenudzie (the decision document appears in Klehr et al., *The Soviet World of American Communism*, pp. 20-21). This letter notes the ruling of the ECCI was unanimous, that the Central Caucus faction must rejoin the regular CPA. “Our opinion is that the majority of the Party has acted fully in accordance with the spirit of the Theses of the World Congress when it quickly proceeded to prepare and carry out the formation of a legal party,” the letter states, adding that the minority secessionists had “broken the unity of the Party, you have opened fire on the Party from the outside.” The Central Caucus’ representative in Moscow, John Ballam, had been won over to the argument of the ECCI and come to an agreement with the regular CPA’s Moscow representative, Ludwig Katterfeld, the document states, arguing for a quick end to factionalism. The dispatch of a CI plenipotentiary (Genrik Valetskii) to aid in the reunification process is also noted.

“Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, New York, March 8-31, 1922.” ***Substantially modified file— adds several pseudonym IDs, standardizes format, alters typography.*** Minutes of the governing CEC of the underground CPA for the month of March 1922. The body met 8 times during the month and dealt with a wide range of topics. Highlights include: a decision to circulate a photostatic copy of the Comintern letter resolving the Central Caucus faction split in favor of the CPA majority (March 8); a declaration by Executive Secretary Jay Lovestone that “the treasury is totally empty, that the needs were pressing, no funds coming in from the districts and that the outlook for improvement was very dark.” (March 8); the appointment of Morris Kushinsky as the Philadelphia District Organizer (March 8); an attempt to name Abram Jakira the Detroit DO (March 8), which was rejected by Jakira. The CEC then demanded a letter of explanation (March 14). Jakira continued to strenuously object and the CEC resolved to establish a voluntary (unpaid) DO for the district (March 23). Further tidbits: Rep to the CI Katterfeld in Moscow was instructed to “try to secure an appropriation of at least 25 [thousand dollars]” (March 10); a per capita convention assessment of \$1 was levied to support the forthcoming 2nd Convention of the CPA and a 1-for-200 members representation agree upon (March 10); Katterfeld was recalled from Moscow, to be replaced by Bedacht (March 10); a forthcoming miners’ strike was prepared for (March 14 and passim); division of work in writing the theses for the 2nd [Bridgman] convention was made (March 16); an attempt to censure Bittelman for editorial misconduct failed and Minor and Cannon resigned from the Editorial Board in protest— Bittelman also attempted to resign, but his resignation was rejected on a tie vote (March 16); and Joseph Zack Kornfeder and Joseph Stilson were appointed as a committee to investigate and reorganize the CPA’s Russian and Jewish Bureaus (March 23, 29).

APRIL

“Apologizing for Liquidators” An unsigned article from the official organ of the “minority” CPA (Central Caucus faction). [April 1922]. This is the bitter reply of the Central Caucus/“minority” CPA to the February 1922 article by Robert Minor entitled “Decision by the Communist International.” The Central Caucus attempts to depict itself as wearing the mantle of authenticity, calling the Central Executive Committee of the regular CEC “former,” their organization “spurious,” and their publication “fraudulent.” The “majority” is said to have “demonstrated its total depravity when it deliberately lied to the Comintern about conditions in the United States.” They are said to have misrepresented the potential following of the “pie-card artists and fakirs” of the Workers’ Council with whom they were uniting in the new Workers Party of America. Katterfeld of the “majority” is said to have deceived the Comintern by misrepresenting the danger that delay in forming a new political organization would present. “That the [minority’s] CP of A still exists is not due to the fact that any stone was left unturned by the liquidators to crush it, but solely to the fact that the genuine Communist membership could not be bamboozled or terrorized by unscrupulous centrist politicians masquerading as Communists,” the article declares, adding that contrary to the “lies” of the “majority,” the Comintern had not rendered its decision on American factional dispute.

“Report no. 14 from Moscow, April 1, 1922” by L.E. Katterfeld. Katterfeld, the Communist Party of America’s Representative to the Executive Committee of the Communist International, summarizes recent events in Moscow prior to his return to the United States via Berlin. He notes the apparent capitulation of John Ballam, present in Moscow to argue the case for the Ballam/Dirba/Ashkenudzie “Central Caucus” faction and that Ballam says he will work to reintegrate his group into the party. Katterfeld outlines terms of the reunification agreement. Katterfeld notes the departure of CI plenipotentiary Genrik Valetskii for America and instructs his correspondents [William Weinstone and Jay Lovestone] to “show him every courtesy possible.” Katterfeld states that Max Bedacht will be unhappy at being asked to resume the role of the CPA’s Representative to ECCI.

“CEC Settles Defense Policy. A document sent by the Workers Party of America to its press, DOs, and Language Bureaus, April 1922.” A document announcing an agreement on the structure of the WPA’s defense committee, reached between a subcommittee of the governing Administrative Council of the Workers Party of America and the previously-existing National Defense Council. A structure of local organizations, separate holding of treasuries, and new defense cards and 5 cent assessment stamps was part of the new system. The new National Defense Council was to be headed by a “Secretary of the National Defense Committee” appointed by the CEC of the WPA. Edgar Owens of Illinois was to remain in this role due to his experience with the task and “widespread satisfaction” with the quality of his work.

“Appeal to the Minority Membership” by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, Section of the Communist International [April 1922] This is the final formal appeal by the Communist Party of America majority to rank and file members of the

Central Caucus faction to adhere to the decision of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and rejoin the CPA. The appeal extensively quotes the CI ruling on the decision to establish a Legal Political Party and harshly attacks the “misleaders” of the minority opposition for conducting a “vicious campaign of breaking up the Communist International in America” — ignoring altogether all subsidiary issues behind the factional split. The rank and file is invited to accept the decision of the CI and to return to the organization “without prejudice” by applying to group, branch, and section organizations for readmission. An interesting sidebar — previously undocumented in the literature — the appeal notes that Charles Dirba “could not continue tolerating this sabotage of Communism and completely dissociated himself from his former colleagues.” On the other hand, John Ballam, who shortly before returned from Moscow as a vocal supporter of the CI decision to reunify the organization — for which he was reviled as a traitor to the cause by the Central Caucus’ “Communist Party of America” — receives no such positive mention.

“Bi-Weekly Newsletter #4 of the National Office, CP of A (Section of the CI), April 3, 1922.” Internal party communication produced by CPA Executive Secretary Jay Lovestone. Lovestone spends the bulk of this issues space on discussion of the ongoing factional struggle with the Central Caucus faction. The “criminal splitting activities” of Ballam, Ashkenuzi, and Dirba has “caused a rift in our ranks, and has unquestionably hurt the Party,” Lovestone notes. Despite a letter from the Comintern to the Central Caucus’ “Communist Party of America” Convention in Jan. 1922, the rift remained—the Central Caucus ostensibly expressing doubts as to the authenticity of the communication. Robert Minor had been sent on a tour of the country to speak before groups of the Opposition and had made some inroads in getting them to rejoin the regular CPA, despite the obstacles placed by the Central Caucus leaders. “As per our request several comrades high in the esteem of the misled Communists will soon be sent to us by the CI to help us in our efforts to unite the Communist forces of America,” says Lovestone—scholars should note this evidence that the CPA actively SOUGHT Comintern intervention and representatives to help mediate and end this split (compare and contrast to the traditional tale of an isolated and ignorant RCP-dominated Comintern deciding and ruling by fiat, sending disciplined underlings to lay down the law). Lovestone asked the CPA rank-and-file to “send in additional suggestions to help us get more results” in the quest for reunification. This newsletter also deals in passing with the forthcoming Bridgman convention, decisions of the Comintern, and party business. With regard to the ongoing miners’ strike, Lovestone proudly declares that “For the first time in the history of our existence as a Party will we have speakers engaged directly in the strike areas.”

“Basis for Reinstatement of the Central Caucus Faction, April 11, 1922,” by Jay Lovestone. Circular letter from Executive Secretary of the unified CPA Jay Lovestone to all District Organizers and Federation Secretaries of the party detailing the terms by which members of “the opposition” [Central Caucus faction] are to be readmitted to the party in accord with the decision of the Communist International. Returning members must “dissolve all forms of independent organization and autonomy, official and unofficial, underground and legal” and acknowledge the authority of the CI, the party, and the subdivisions of the party. They must additionally pay back dues to the CPA to April 1922, and purchase at least one

convention stamp. "All former members rejoining the Party on this basis become members in good standing with full membership rights and obligations," according to the directive. Includes details of procedures for reintegration of full groups and branches into the CPA.

"A Social Rat's End: Coward and Squealer Begs for Mercy from a Capitalist Judge -- Max Cohen and his Final Groan." (The New Age) [April 13, 1922] Interesting background detail on the life saga of Max Cohen, secretary of the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party and member of the Central Executive Committee of the underground Communist Party of America before being expelled for criticizing the party leadership and shuttled off on a Comintern mission to Central America. According to this snarky news report from the Socialist Party press, Cohen had been under indictment for violation of the New York Criminal Anarchy statute since November 1919 but had fled the state to Mexico. He turned himself in in April 1922, professing to having seen the error of his ways, promising not to associate with radicals, and professing to have become an "ultra conservative." As a result of this meek appeal for mercy Cohen received, it seems from this article, a suspended four year jail term sentence and five years of probation.

"Report to the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, April 14, 1922" by Jay Lovestone. Jay Lovestone served a first stint as Executive Secretary of the CPA in 1922, taking over for Will Weinstone on Feb. 22, 1922, and serving for several months. This is an interesting document from the Comintern Archive, a report by Lovestone to the guiding CEC of the party—a sort of "State of the Party" speech. Lovestone provides a district by district breakdown of the faction fight with the Central Caucus opposition, as well as brief reports on the federations, the status of the Friends of Soviet Russia organization, the Workers Party of America, and party finances (cutbacks of staff and tight budgets being the order of the day),

"Statement to the Membership of the Communist Party of America by the CEC, April 24, 1922." At the session held Monday, April 17, 1922, the Central Executive Committee decided to reorganize itself, with a number of members voluntarily submitting resignations and three voted upon, in order to make way for three new members of the body—Robert Minor, Alfred Wagenknecht, and Earl Browder. This document was signed by the entire CEC, including its resigning members (Will Weinstone, Joseph Zack Kornfeder, and "Green") to announce the change to the rank and file of the Communist Party. No change in the line of the CEC in the ongoing factional fight with the Central Caucus faction was to be implied in this personnel change, the document stated, adding that "those who voluntarily resigned have set before the membership an example of personal disinterestedness and Party devotion which if followed generally will quickly cement the unity of all Communist forces..."

MAY

"Open Letter to Every "Minority" Member, from the Central Executive Committee, CPA." [circa May 1, 1922] This document, very likely written by CPA Executive Secretary Jay

Lovestone, was transmitted to the members of the Central Caucus faction, inviting them to rejoin the party “without discrimination” in accord with the unanimous decision of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. According to terms of the CI’s binding directive, 60 days after first publication of the decision were to be allowed for those who had left the CPA to rejoin without penalty. After June 28, 1922, however, “in accord with this decision...you are definitely expelled from the CI.” Each member was invited to decide for themselves whether to rejoin—bearing in mind that the decision might mean the severing of old friendships and associations. To help resolve difficulties that may arise as part of the reunification process “the CI has sent a special plenipotentiary representative” [Genrik Valetskii] the document notes.

“Address to the Convention of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers, Wednesday, May 3, 1922,” by C.E. Ruthenberg. C.E. Ruthenberg, former Executive Secretary of the CPA and future Executive Secretary of the Workers Party, was freed from prison on \$5,000 bond pending the outcome of his appeal on Monday, April 24, 1922. Just 10 days later he made this speech to the convention of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Ruthenberg noted that the prosperity of the war years had given way to about 18 months of economic turmoil, opening the way for a capitalist offensive against the working class—resulting in reduced wages, longer working hours, and an assault on the right of workers to organize. The Communists were not an enemy of the union movement as they had been falsely portrayed, Ruthenberg said, but rather were active and committed members of the unions themselves, struggling both for union goals aimed at amelioration of the immediate needs of the workers as well as making ready for “the time when the workers will take over and administer industry.”

“Report of the International Delegate to the Conference of the CP of A,” by John J. Ballam [delivered circa May 8, 1922] This is the text of an extensive and quite detailed report by the International Delegate of the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition, John Ballam, on his efforts to advance the faction’s agenda in Moscow. Ballam states that he arrived in Moscow on March 12, 1922, and was met immediately by the Moscow representative of the regular CPA, Ludwig Katterfeld. Katterfeld informed Ballam that ECCI had appointed a 3 member American Commission, consisting of Heinrich Brandler, Mátyás Rákosi, and Otto Kuusinen, to finally resolve the American party situation. This American Commission met on March 15, Ballam states, with Ballam forced to participate despite the lack of substantiating documents, which had been entrusted to a courier for transit to Moscow and which were still not received by him. The American Commission asked Ballam whether he had a concrete proposal to make to end the American stalemate, to which Ballam responded that “if any proposals were made to settle it, they should come from Carr [Katterfeld].” Katterfeld submitted such a document at that time, Ballam notes, adding that he believed the American Commission would act no further until Ballam’s documentary materials were received. Instead, the very next day he was called before a full meeting of ECCI, where the body was prepared to decide upon the American question based upon the document drawn up by Katterfeld. Ballam submitted a 9 point counterproposal (full text included here) which would have established a 3 member committee, consisting of Ballam for the Opposition, Bedacht for the Regulars, and a third non-factional member appointed by the Comintern, to call a unity convention. However, “Zinoviev declared that since the question of the organization of the legal party was eliminated, the theoretical differences between the two factions were wiped out and that therefore the EC should adopt the report of

the American Commission.” This caused Ballam to issue a lengthy formal protest (text included here) charging the American Commission with a lack of due diligence in investigating the American situation and asserting “no adequate solution of the difficulty can be achieved in this haphazard manner.” ECCI then referred the matter back to an expanded 5 member American Commission, with Boris Souvarine (supporter of the Opposition) and Boris Reinstein added to the mix. The expanded American Commission waited “4 or 5 days” for Ballam’s documents to surface in Moscow, and when they did not decided to proceed. Ballam then proposed the appointment of a 3 member ECCI Investigating Committee with plenipotentiary powers, headed by Mikhail Borodin, to be dispatched to America to resolve the situation. Katterfeld objected that this commission would supercede the CEC. It was ultimately determined by the American Commission that the real agenda of Ballam and the CPA Opposition was to sink the already constituted legal political party, the Workers Party of America, and the tide turned decisively. The Opposition was defeated on this main issue, in Ballam’s estimation: “In the meantime I talked with Zinoviev and others about the American question. There is not a person in Moscow who formerly belonged to our faction that supports our position. Not one of the representatives of the Communist parties of other countries in Moscow that supports our position. Our only friend was the old man Yavki [Sen Katayama] and even he was opposed to our position on the LPP [WPA].” Ballam concludes: “They are sending their representative to this country [Genrik Valetski]. He carries a mandate directly from the EC and has plenipotentiary powers. I advise you to give him all the facts.”

“Decision of the CEC [of the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition],” by “J. Davis” [Mrs. A.S. Edwards] [circa May 12, 1922] This article by the Executive Secretary of the CPA Opposition (former Central Caucus faction) relates the decision of the group’s Central Executive Committee to the Report of International Delegate John Ballam. The Opposition chose to repudiate the agreement for unification agreed to in Moscow by their representative John Ballam and the representative of the regular CPA, Ludwig Katterfeld, due to “inadequate and incomplete” investigation of the American situation by the American Commission of ECCI and “short time devoted to the matter” by ECCI itself. Instead, the CEC of the Opposition calls for a thorough investigation of the situation by a committee of investigation of both factions, headed by ECCI Rep Valetski, followed by “immediate expulsion of all those who advocated the liquidation of the CPA” from the ranks of the regular party. Only after these preconditions were met would the Opposition agree to meet in “a convention of the two factions...called for the purpose of solidifying the Communist forces in this country”—note that this phrasing does not include the words “unity” or “amalgamation.” Ballam responded to the repudiation of his agreement with Katterfeld by moving over to the ranks of the regular CPA, where he agitated for unity on behalf of the CEC.

“Death Chills Seize Meeting of Socialist Party,” by C.E. Ruthenberg. [May 13, 1922] The new Executive Secretary of the Workers Party of America, C.E. Ruthenberg, observed and wrote about the 1922 Cleveland Convention of the Socialist Party of America. He depicted it as a lifeless gathering, showing “senile decay.” As for the small group of assembled delegates, Ruthenberg notes that “A majority of them are portly, gray-haired men with a look of petty-bourgeois prosperity about them. They talk in the language of past Socialist conventions, but there is no enthusiasm, no fervor, in what they say.” Ruthenberg isolated the root cause of this geriatric decay in the blows struck against the industrialist Left Wing at the 1912

Indianapolis Convention—“anti-sabotage, anti-force, and narrow definition of political action constitutional clauses” which drove vital elements from a 100,000 member organization. At the 1917 St. Louis Convention these “elderly men” were unable to control the gathering but sabotaged the party’s militant position against the war by lack of action, Ruthenberg charged, while at the 1919 Chicago Convention they presided over a mass purge of 3/4 of the party’s membership that resulted in the current lifeless skeleton organization.

“Constitution of the Young Workers League of America: Adopted by the First National Convention, New York City—May 13-15, 1922.” Basic document of organizational law of the Young Workers League, ostensibly the youth section of the Workers Party of America. Interesting in that there is no reference to either the WPA or the Young Communist International in the document, nor is there any sort of party-control mechanism inserted into the structure of the YWL. Instead, the YWL was established as an independent organization, its membership open to “all young proletarians between the ages of 14 and 30,” with its National Conventions designated the supreme authority of the organization. The National Conventions were to elect a “National Executive Committee” of 7 persons, at least 5 of whom were to live in the designated city of the national headquarters, as well as 5 alternates. The headquarters city was to be designated by the convention—which chose Chicago (and this while national headquarters of the Workers Party of America and the underground Communist Party of America were both based in New York!). Structurally, the organization was to be built of “branches” of between 5 and 150 members, which multiple branches in a single urban local to elect proportional “City Central Committees.” Initiation fee was 25 cents and monthly dues (receipted with stamps) were 25 cents per month—of which the National Office was to keep 10 cents, the City Central Committee 5 cents, and the branch 10 cents. There was no parallel structure for language federations, but rather branches of any language were to have an equal relationship to the National Executive Committee.

“Letter to the Executive Committee of the Communist International,” by L.E. Katterfeld, May 25, 1922. Katterfeld, a member of the ECCI Presidium, writes to his colleagues in Moscow on the American political situation. He finds a confusing situation in which some members of the Central Caucus group (an organization which split the party over establishment of a legal political party late in Nov. 1921) favored and were working for reintegration into the regular CPA, while members of the group were not. At the same time, some members of the regular CPA (Cannon, Bedacht, and others) were anxious to keep the Central Caucus group out altogether and were likewise working to sabotage the CI-mandated program of reunification. On top of that, Katterfeld notes a growing trend favoring outright “liquidation” of the underground CPA apparatus and the naming of the Workers Party of America as the official affiliate of the Comintern. Katterfeld states that a substantial majority of the party shares his view favoring retention of some sort of underground apparatus in addition to the legal WPA.

“Theses on the United Front of Labor,” a confidential document adopted by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America at its session of May 29, 1922. A fascinating glimpse from the Comintern Archives at the thinking of the governing CEC of the Communist Party with respect to its United Front strategy. The majority of the American

proletariat was not conscious of its distinct class interests, the document stated, and could gain awareness—and usefulness to the revolutionary movement—only through its daily struggle over wages, working conditions, etc. These struggles would expose reformist economic and political leaderships as enemies of the working class. While a broad united front might be constructed in the labor field through the amalgamation process, in the political sphere established parties claiming to represent the working class must be eliminated from positions of leadership. Practice would prove the superiority of the Workers Party's tactics, slogans, aims, and leadership and a role of political leadership would consequently follow. The Communists must become a factor in any Labor Party to be formed in America. "We can achieve this end only if we anticipate the formation of such a party and now adopt a policy through which we will become established as a force in the political struggle of the workers..." Any party emerging from the Conference for Progressive Political Action would be retrograde due to its eclectic class composition, however. This organization would dissipate working class power in "election campaigns fought on the basis of petty ameliorative reforms and of schemes for minor changes in the form of capitalist government." Only a federative United Front Labor Party allowing the Workers Party's continued existence "as a distinct organization with a disciplined, educated membership acting upon a program to give leadership to the struggles of the workers," complete with "its full independence, its right of criticism, and its freedom of action" would be acceptable, according to these theses. Primary authorship of this document has been attributed to Max Bedacht.

JUNE

Circular Letter to All District Organizers of the Communist Party of America Regarding 1922 Convention Apportionment from Max Bedacht, Acting Executive Secretary, circa June 1922.

Circular letter to District Organizers informing each of the number of delegates allotted to the forthcoming Second Convention of the unified CPA. The delegate apportionment was based on average paid membership in the organization from January through April 1922. The figures provided for each of the 11 districts of the organization show an average paid membership of just 4,720—in round numbers, about half of the paid membership of the two parties during the extremely difficult year of 1920. Moving into the Bridgman convention of 1922 the underground Communist Party of America was nearly bankrupt, its membership dissipated, its influence in the outside world non-existent. The Chicago District was the unified CPA's largest during this period, with nearly 1,000 average paid members; New York followed with an average of just over 800, with the Boston District third largest at just over 600 paid per month. At the same time the underground CPA reached its nadir, the legal arm of the American Communist movement, the Workers Party of America, began to find its organizational legs, quickly doubling and tripling the size of the underground movement with the infusion of new blood, particularly through the Finnish and Jewish federations.

"Minutes of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America: New York, May 29 to June 1, 1922." A full session of the CEC of the CPA met daily in New York City from May 29 to June 1, 1922. Important decisions of this plenary session included: a

juggling of personnel at the Federated Press, with E.J. Costello confined to editorial work and Tom Tippet taking over as managing editor transitionally until the role could be fulfilled by Carl Haessler (May 29); the appointment of Ben Gitlow as Industrial Organizer for the 3 Northeastern districts (May 29); the reopening (yet again) of the Albert Verblin spy case (May 29); the election of Max Bedacht as Assistant Secretary of the party, to serve in the absence of Jay Lovestone, who was going to Europe (May 29); the replacement of Alex Bittelman on the Political Committee by C.E. Ruthenberg and the replacement of Jay Lovestone on the Organization Committee by Ben Gitlow (May 31). On June 1, the report of the Budget Committee was heard. An infusion of Comintern cash in the amount of approximately \$40,000 seems to have been received by the CPA— \$1,000 of which was dedicated to the Communist Party of Canada, which was not allowed a direct appropriation under the 1922 budget process in Moscow. About 40% of the remaining \$39,000 was committed to previously incurred and short term projected expenses (back wages, missed payments to federations, printers bills, convention expenses, etc.) with the balance going to the CPA Organization fund (\$5,000), TUEL (\$5,000), the WPA (\$5,000), a reserve account for a national daily paper (\$5,000), the YCL (\$1,500), the *Freiheit* (\$1,000), *Voice of Labor* (\$500), the Federated Press (\$500), and the Women's Secretariat (\$500), (all these numbers except the TUEL figure slightly higher than the actual amount appropriated). Federation affairs in the Russian, Ukrainian, and South Slavic Federations were also discussed (June 1). Earl Browder was named the representative of the CEC to the NEC of the Young Communist League and Arne Swabeck was named representative to the NEC of the Young Workers League (both of which were based in Chicago).

“The Task of the Hour,” by Alfred S. Edwards [circa June 1, 1922] With ECCI coming down on the side of the regular CPA against the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition, there were some who refused to submit to discipline, as indicated by this hardline call to arms in the factional war by A.S. Edwards (“Sullivan”). “By an accident the control over our party got into the hands of the former gas-socialists and social-patriots, now political prostitutes, who are for the Comintern as long as they can secure jobs for themselves,” Edwards rages. “It was only natural to expect that former Bolsheviks, who had fought this gang for 10 and 15 years in the Socialist Party, would not be tolerated in a CP controlled by their old and bitter enemies, consequently 5,000 members were expelled. The ‘experiment’ of the Comintern in uniting Centrists and Communists that resulted in the 1921 Joint Unity Convention [Woodstock: May 15-28, 1921] was a complete failure.” Now that the Opposition had “succeeded in organizing the expelled Communists into a strong party, after we have established our legal and illegal press and organizations and are beginning to ‘go to the masses’ and gaining their confidence,” the regular CPA was using the authority of the Comintern to destroy the fledgling organization, Edwards declares. He adds that “the order to disband our organization and turn all our press, property, and organization over to the Mensheviks is nothing but a defeat. And this is done at a time when the Mensheviks have come to a complete intellectual, moral, and financial bankruptcy.” Edwards charges that his foes Katterfeld, Bedacht & Co. had won the day at ECCI by weaving a fabric of lies and grossly exaggerating their organizational strength. “The question to be decided now is whether we continue our Communist work and by doing so disobey the Comintern, or obey the Comintern and disband our organization,” Edwards notes, adding: “The only way out is shown by our Party Conference [New York: May 8-12, 1922]: to continue our good Communist work and ask for a complete investigation from the Comintern. We love the Comintern, but we love still more the Communist movement.”

“Letter to Max Bedacht [“James Marshall”], Acting Executive Secretary, CPA, from Joseph Kowalski [“A. Gorny”], Secretary of the Polish Bureau, CPA, June 17, 1922.”

Short note from Joseph Kowalski, head of the Polish Bureau of the underground CPA (depicted as a Muscovite supervillain in DoJ gumshoe Jacob Spolansky’s laughably melodramatic and factually sparse Cold War tome, *The Communist Trail in America*) to the acting head of the CPA, Max Bedacht. This communication emphasizes the utter poverty in which the CPA was enmeshed during the first half of 1922. Peeking up from behind his propaganda-laden desk, the shrewd Communist boss Bedacht must have let out a low whistle as he glanced furtively at the words of the Polish-American Bolshevik superrevolutionist detailing his progress in fulfillment of his nefarious tasks: “For the last few weeks all the work in Polish Bureau was hampered on account of lack of money. Theses are out and same ought to be translated. This cannot be done, because we have no typewriter and after all I have not a place where I could perform party work. In such circumstances I cannot accomplish the duties which were given to me by CEC and Pol[ish] Bureau, and therefore I cannot take any responsibility.” The only way out of the “serious situation” was for Kowalski to submit his resignation, which he was doing forthwith, the letter indicates.

“Letter to Earl Browder in New York from Jim Cannon in Moscow, June 18, 1922.” This is the first report from Moscow to America by Jim Cannon, representative of the Communist Party of America to the Red International of Labor Unions in Moscow. Cannon details how the United States was effectively without representation on the RILU Bureau after former representative “George” [Andreychine] essentially abandoned his post. The vacancy is said to have been known to Cannon’s factional foe CI Rep Katterfeld, but “the information never leaked through to me.” Cannon tells Browder that “I had a session with the Bureau a few days after my arrival, making a general report of the activity in America and bringing up the question of policy which we discussed just before my departure in regard to the independent unions. I gave a general outline of our point of view and the reasons for it. They manifested great interest in the report and were greatly pleased with the work done in America.” Cannon also notes the dispatch of Boris Reinstein to America from RILU. Prospects of an infusion of money through this emissary are excellent, In Cannon’s view, as Reinstein “is going for the express purpose of endeavoring, through private resources of his own, to get some substantial assistance to you.” Cannon adds that “The big question before the next Congress of the Profintern (set for November 28 [1922]) will be relations with the Syndicalists.”

Circular Letter to All District Organizers of the unified CPA, from Max Bedacht, Acting Secretary, June 20, 1922.

Circular letter from the acting Executive Secretary of the unified CPA Max Bedacht to all DOs of the organization detailing the approaching end of the campaign to reintegrate adherents of the Central Caucus faction into the CPA. Bedacht notes that June 25, 1922 is the final day in which members of the opposition can return to the party without additional penalty and with all rights—including the right to vote for delegates to the 2nd Convention of the CPA, which was held in Bridgman, Michigan in August. A series of meetings are to be organized for June 25th to facilitate the termination of the split and a good faith effort is to be made by the DOs to gain maximum participation by opposition communists at these events. “This instruction is issued so that no excuse may be given by members of the

opposition afterward that they were unable to connect up in time. Please make a conscientious effort to wind up this “opposition campaign” in good faith to the decision of the Comintern so that those failing to obey have no ground for attack on the score of our unwillingness to carry out our share of the bargain,” Bedacht says.

Political Prisoners in Russia by “James A. Marshall” [Max Bedacht] [June 17, 1922] The mentality of Communist Party loyalists of the 1930s and later faithfully defending unsavory actions of the regime in Soviet Russia had clear origins in the 1920s. The “Trial of the Socialist Revolutionaries” of 1922 was the first controversial show trial of the post-Civil War period, putting leading members of the PSR on trial for their lives as alleged participants in a terrorist conspiracy against the regime. This article by Max Bedacht appeared in the English weekly *The Worker*. Bedacht is harshly critical of the Socialist Party of America, the Workmen’s Circle, and the ILGWU for defending the Socialist Revolutionaries and other political prisoners in Russia. Bedacht has no doubt about the veracity of the charges against them: “Whoever demands the release of such bandits and murderers identifies himself with them and their acts.” Bedacht charges the Mensheviks organized the counterrevolutionary government of Arkhangelsk, fanned labor discontent and led strikes against the regime, “The Mensheviks, these enemies of terror, organized the White terror the first days of the revolution,” Bedacht charges. As for the PSR, this group attempted to sabotage the peace agreement with Germany by assassinating Count Mirbach in 1918, kindled local uprisings, and “until the final defeat of foreign intervention, the SR called for and supported foreign intervention.” SR’s inspired the Antonov revolt, were responsible for the assassination of Uritsky and Volodarsky, and bombed Bolshevik Party headquarters in Moscow. “And the leaders of that party who were caught in the meshes of the Cheka as murderers and would-be murderers, as organizers of the counterrevolution, as agents of Petliura and Pilsudski, as tools of capitalism and the capitalist class, are to be released as ‘politicals’ from Russian prisons,” Bedacht scornfully remarks.

“Activity in Ohio,” by Caleb Harrison. [June 1922] Around the first of May, 1922, Executive Secretary of the Workers Party of America Caleb Harrison stepped down from his position to make room for C.E. Ruthenberg, newly released from prison in New York. Harrison embarked on a short speaking tour as a “National Organizer” for the party before settling down as the new District Organizer for WPA D6 [Cleveland]. This outstanding piece of social history was written by new DO Harrison about his visits to striking miners in Neffs, Bellaire, and Fairpoint, Ohio—a glimpse of the radical members of the working class that rallied to the support of the new organization.

“Report on the United States of America: A confidential document prepared for the Comintern, June 1922.” by James P. Cannon A lengthy and detailed assessment of the economic and political situation in America attributed to WPA man in Moscow James P. Cannon and dated to June 1922 from content. An extremely revealing glimpse at party thinking with regard to specific unions (United Mine Workers, Metal trades, Needle trades, Railway Brotherhoods, local federations) the role of the Trade Union Educational League, the position of the party towards the IWW and the Socialist Party, the Farmer-Labor Party, the Conference for Progressive Political Action, negro political organization, Russian famine relief, application of

the United Front policy, role of the party press, position of the CEC towards the Central Caucus faction opposition, and the relationship between the underground CPA and the “overground” WPA—including specifics about the thinking of dissenters on the Central Executive Committee Ludwig Katterfeld, Alfred Wagenknecht, and Robert Minor. Cannon speaks of a conscious strategy of the CEC to shift the “seat of Party authority” from the underground party (as a directing center of the legal organization) to the legal organization (with the underground apparatus a sub-division under the control of the “overground” organization. This transition is slated to take time, Cannon indicates, as “the CEC takes the position that the seat of Party authority can be transferred from the illegal to the legal party only after the latter has become a Communist Party in the full sense of the word—if its program, contents of propaganda, international affiliation, and name are those of a Communist Party.”

“Circular Letter to All District Organizers of the unified CPA, from Max Bedacht, Acting Secretary, June 20, 1922.” ** modified version, replaces defective earlier version. **

Circular letter from the acting Executive Secretary of the unified CPA Max Bedacht to all DOs of the organization detailing the approaching end of the campaign to reintegrate adherents of the Central Caucus faction into the CPA. Bedacht notes that June 25, 1922 is the final day in which members of the opposition can return to the party without additional penalty and with all rights—including the right to vote for delegates to the 2nd Convention of the CPA, which was held in Bridgman, Michigan in August. A series of meetings are to be organized for June 25th to facilitate the termination of the split and a good faith effort is to be made by the DOs to gain maximum participation by opposition communists at these events. “This instruction is issued so that no excuse may be given by members of the opposition afterward that they were unable to connect up in time. Please make a conscientious effort to wind up this “opposition campaign” in good faith to the decision of the Comintern so that those failing to obey have no ground for attack on the score of our unwillingness to carry out our share of the bargain,” Bedacht says.

“Declaration to the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America, Section of the Communist International,” by Central Bureau, Lithuanian Federation of the Central Caucus faction. [June 21, 1922]. Faced with an ultimatum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to rejoin the official Communist Party of America or face expulsion from the Communist International, the Central Bureau of the Lithuanian Federation voted unanimously at its June 21, 1922, session to rejoin the official party, to turn over its records to the majority group, and to appeal to the members of the Lithuanian Federation to do likewise. The document was signed by “B. Karpus” as Secretary of the Central Caucus faction’s Lithuanian Federation.

“Report of “John Moore,” Delegate of the Minority Faction of the CP of A to the Comintern, to the CEC, June 27, 1922, ” by John J. Ballam. Ballam, one of the leaders of the Central Caucus faction that split from the CPA in late November and early December of 1921, went to Moscow to state his faction’s case. He was met with a torrent of harsh criticism, and the Anglo-American Department of the Executive Committee of the Comintern stated in no uncertain terms that the factional struggle should come to an immediate close, with members of the Central Caucus faction to rejoin the CPA within 60 days of publication of its directive or face

expulsion from the American party and the international communist movement. Ballam was converted to this task but was unable to persuade the Central Caucus to end its fight at a conference held in the middle of May. As a result, Ballam was sent on a tour of the country by the CPA's Central Executive Committee, along with Ludwig Katterfeld, in an attempt to win back the rank and file members of the Central Caucus "over the heads" of the factional leadership. This is a report written by Ballam for the CEC on the results of his tour, featuring district by district analysis of the strength of the "Minority faction."

"Report of the Executive Secretary to the Meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America: New York—June 29, 1922," by C.E.

Ruthenberg Executive Secretary of the WPA C.E. Ruthenberg was not a spellbinding orator or an original Marxist theoretician, but he did possess a skill set that made uniquely suited for the job. This first report of his issued as Executive Secretary of the Workers Party of America (following his April 24, 1922 release from prison in New York on bail) demonstrates Ruthenberg's organizational prowess. Organizational expenditures and revenues were carefully itemized, categorized, tallied, and analyzed; Federations were surveyed about their membership size and assets and the results were reported succinctly and coherently; the WPA's defenses situation was summarized. Of particular interest is the fact that the WPA ran at a deficit of just over \$2,000 per month for the first 5 months of its existence—a considerable sum, particularly given the parallel dismal financial situation of the underground CPA. Nearly half of this deficit was run up through the operation of the party's weekly English language newspaper, *The Worker*. A second financial summary including the last week of May and the month of June depicts the WPA as having turned the financial corner, running in the black.

JULY

"Current Phases of the Class Struggle in the United States," by William D. Haywood [July 1922] A brief summary of American labor events for a British Communist readership by expatriate Yank William D. "Big Bill" Haywood. Haywood deals with the recently concluded convention of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association and its so-called "open shop" campaign, a threatened strike of the 16 railway brotherhoods, the strike of the Chicago building trades, continued strife among mineworkers in Kansas (pitting union leader Alex Howatt against the state's "industrial court"), strikes of Chicago meatpackers and marine transport workers and the Ladies' Garment Workers' in New York, the violent West Virginia coal strike, and so forth.

"Theses on Relations of the CP to an LPP: by the Central Executive Committee of the CP of A, Section of the Communist International." [July 1922] One of the 3 sets of Theses prepared for decision by the August 1922 Bridgman Convention of the Communist Party of America, this the official "Theses of the CEC," drafted by Robert Minor. Although none of the 3 sets of Theses were used as the actual basis for discussion at the convention, according to the report of CI Rep Genrik Valetski, the Minor-CEC Theses most closely anticipated the thinking of the gathering, attempting to steer a middle course between one-sided orientations towards

either open or underground organizational forms. On the one hand, the CEC Theses hold that: "The leadership of the masses of the exploited can be attained only by directly engaging in all their struggles, together with the masses of the workers. In a country where political conditions permit the possibility of mass political organizations of the working class, the revolutionary party cannot secure leadership without securing a powerful, and finally dominant position among such mass political organizations of the workers... In America, it has become the most urgent immediate task of the Communists to secure a public, open, so-called 'legal' existence as an organization." On the other hand: "The overthrow of the capitalist system can only come through the violent overthrow of the capitalist state. To accept this view is to accept the certainty that the capitalist state will find itself in violent conflict with the masses led by the Communist Party, and that the state will attempt to destroy the Communist Party. While the capitalist state retains the governmental machinery, and as the struggle grows sharper in approaching the final struggle, the capitalist state will inevitably strike again and again at the revolutionary party in the effort to destroy it. After the Communist Party shall have established itself in the open, it must be prepared for, and must expect to be driven out of a 'legal' existence from time to time. The Communist Party must at all times be so organized that such attacks cannot destroy it." Dual organization with firm primacy of the underground organization at every level of decision-making authority is envisioned.

"Theses on the Relations of No. 1 [the CPA] and 2 [the LPP]," by Israel Amter ("J. Ford") and Abram Jakira ("A. Dubner") [July 1922] One of the 3 sets of Theses prepared for decision by the August 1922 Bridgman Convention of the Communist Party of America, this the Theses of the "Anti-Liquidation" faction (so-called "Geese"), prepared by Israel Amter and Abram Jakira. This Left Wing orientation is based upon a view of an impending violent class struggle: "Government is force organized by one class to keep another in subjection. When the subject class becomes conscious of the oppression under which it labors, it organizes to overthrow the class in power. This struggle, of necessity, develops into a struggle of force against force—of the armed force of the oppressed class against the armed forces of the class in power, the government." This situation of acute class struggle "makes it impossible, as history has shown, for a party with this program to carry on its most essential work in the open. The conflict with the government is so brutal and so frequent that the revolutionary organization working openly would be disrupted and ground to pieces by the superior force of the state. The Communists, therefore, are compelled to function as an underground party..." While the underground form of organization is admitted to be "very cumbersome" and insufficient "for the overthrow of the capitalist system," the Legal Party is envisioned as essentially a transmission belt through which the underground party can participate in and direct the day-to-day struggles of the working class. "The underground CP, remaining as an organization within the open Party, continues to be the directing and controlling body," the "Ford-Dubner Theses" declare—an ongoing situation which "will continue up to and through the revolution and to the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

"Problem of Communist Organization in the US," by C.E. Ruthenberg ("Damon") and Max Bedacht ("Marshall") [July 1922] One of the 3 sets of Theses prepared for decision by the August 1922 Bridgman Convention of the Communist Party of America, this the Theses of the "Independent" faction (so-called "Liquidationists"), prepared by C.E. Ruthenberg and Max Bedacht. Whereas the Left Wing "Ford-Dubner Theses" envisioned an ongoing underground

Communist Party acting in a directing capacity in the legal movement in perpetuity, through the entire revolutionary period, the comparatively Centrist “Damon-Marshall Theses” emphasize the transformation of the underground CPA into a legal form, albeit one still retaining a component underground apparatus as a means of defense and for the conduct of special tasks not possible by an organization adhering strictly to the legality of the capitalist state. The Communist Party had been driven underground by dire necessity, Ruthenberg and Bedacht declare, and the cost had been great, with membership plummeting from 50,000 to 60,000 to barely 10,000. Of this small remaining contingent, “it would be difficult to find 500 American comrades.” This situation mandated a fundamental restructuring of the party organization, Ruthenberg and Bedacht contend, for it was an impossibility for a miniscule party of foreign-born workers to fulfill its historic role as the vanguard of the American working class in any coming revolution. “There is no revolutionary virtue in a Communist Party being an underground organization. It is at all times a bitter necessity against which the party must fight with all its energies,” the “Damon-Marshall Theses” declare. In contrast to the hysteria of 1919, in the year 1922 the capitalist class did not feel insecure with respect to the revolutionary movement, and the pre-war norms of bourgeois legality and constitutional rights had been largely restored. “The CP must take advantage of this situation to again achieve existence as an open CP,” Ruthenberg and Bedacht declare. They call for an ongoing expansion of the function of the legal political party, with the dualism of the underground organization steadily eliminated. Eventually, the Communist movement would achieve a fully legalized status. “After the CPA becomes an open party it will maintain an illegal apparatus for the conduct of such work as cannot be carried on openly. It will maintain machinery necessary to carry the party underground in case of renewed attack upon the organization,” Ruthenberg and Bedacht declare. It is worth noting that although the “Damon-Marshall Theses” were defeated at the 1922 Bridgman Convention, this theoretical conception ultimately was the one which described the development of the Communist movement over the coming months, as the legal Workers Party of America, headed by Ruthenberg, grew and prospered and expanded in function, while the underground Communist Party of America, headed by Jakira, withered and was ultimately terminated.

“That Centrist!” by Max Bedacht (“James A. Marshall”) [July 1922] Max Bedacht, a former CPA Rep in Moscow and leading member of the CPA Right in the 1922 factional controversy defends himself eloquently against charges of “Centrism” in this article from the underground organ of the party. Bedacht depicts himself as the recipient of ill-earned epithets ensuing from a struggle in the party between “Marxian Realism” and “Infantile Leftism.” Bedacht declares that “the slogans of the Lefts in the United States today are those of yesterday; and their slogans of this year are those of yesteryear. Untiringly they shout, ‘Centrist!’” This epithet was inappropriately used, Bedacht asserts, meaning in reality the supporters of the 2-1/2 International—those “who ‘believes’ in the proletarian revolution—but condemns the means by which it must be accomplished.” The “100 Percenters” in the party (a play on the reactionary nationalists of the day who described themselves as “100% Americans”) had mutated this precise concept into the following, Bedacht contends: “A Centrist is one who does not believe as we do.” Bedacht asserts that the essential point of the Communist movement was that “the proletarian dictatorship exercised through workers councils must be the instrument of the proletarian revolution, and that such a dictatorship—a proletarian state—must supercede the capitalist dictatorship, the capitalist state.” by way of contrast, the “100% Shylocks” attempted to make use of the phrase “armed insurrection” in every place and situation the “test of Communist understanding,” Bedacht states. While contending their so-called “Centrist”

opponents did not believe in centralization and discipline, it was the “100 Percenters” who repeatedly broke discipline and demoralized and weakened the party, Bedacht indicates. He notes finally that 3/4 of the sections of the Comintern are open parties, that the American Communist movement was driven underground by dire necessity, and “that the CPA cannot accomplish its task in America through the underground organization and must for that reason create open instruments.” Therefore, “when the possibility of an open existence of the CPA is established by the actual practice of the open instrument, the reestablishment of the CPA as an open party becomes an imperative duty,” Bedacht declares. After expounding his views on the situation further, Bedacht notes: “This is my program. If that be ‘Centrism,’ if that be ‘liquidation,’ make the best of it. But remember, the Communist International will say the last word in this question as it has done so before in a similar question.” The problem in the party is not “Centrism,” but “Leftism” against “Common Sense,” Bedacht asserts.

“The Blight of Purity,” by Robert Minor (“J. Ballister”) [July 1922] One of the most perceptive and brilliant analyses of the underground period by CEC member Robert Minor. Although characterized in the literature as an adherent of the Anti-Liquidation faction (following the 1950s-era recollections of Jim Cannon to Theodore Draper, Cannon incidentally having been outside the country from mid-May 1922), Minor seems to have actually quite clearly occupied a position between the extremes of CPA factional discourse. Be that as it may... Minor wittily declares that the American Communist movement is “Descended from the Theological Apes,” automatically and blindly carrying forward not only “many of the foolish traits of our deceased Aunt, the Socialist Party,” but also “many of the outworn and stupid thought-forms of the old religious movements.” Minor declares the thinking of the typical CP member to be partly that of “a morbid, hysterical, shallow-witted and self-righteous Christian Baptist or synagogue Jew or Catholic.” Instead of looking at the world with open eyes and attempting to eliminate analytical mistakes, these individuals tend to see themselves as a “Chosen People,” possessors of indisputable “Truth” which is “Pure and unchangeable,” and missionaries of the one “True Faith.” Minor notes that “this way of thinking has been the basis on which thousands of sects have grouped themselves during many hundreds of years. The habit of mind did not stop suddenly on the day that Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto.” “If we say that ‘we are the vanguard of the proletariat,’ it may not be perfectly untrue, but to reason from that basis is perfect rot. It is in violent contradiction to the whole process of Marxian thought and action.” Only direct contact with the working class could prevent an organization’s hermetical sealing into a sect, in Minor’s view—thus the need for an expansion of the Communist movement’s open functions. Minor makes a case for the “CEC Theses” on the underground and legal parties which he drafted. He notes that these theses call for an organic unity between open and underground arms of the movement. He also notes that the need for the most tested and committed party members for underground work will ensure the continuation of an underground core even within a legal party. Minor is sharply critical of sectarian purity and a desire to produce and distribute “armed leaflets” in lieu of participation in the actual class struggle. Minor also identifies and analyzes for perhaps the first time in the Communist press the problem of membership churn: “In a surprising number of cases, both in the CP of A and in the Minority Opposition [former Central Caucus-CPA], whole Party groups and even branches have simply dried up with useless formality. Comrades that came into the Party full of enthusiasm and willingness to work endless hours at Communist work have found their days and nights piled up with tedious routine having no apparent connection with the revolutionary movement, which is teeming in development in the world outside of their stale, dry meetings. Time and again, young, enthusiastic workers whom I personally know have come into the Party and then

dropped out. When I ask them why they dropped out, they invariably mention being forced to listen to long-winded, mimeographed reports and to eternal petty squabbles of little bureaucrats.”

“Memorandum to All Groups of the CPA from Jay Lovestone, Executive Secretary.”

[July 25, 1922] This breathless memorandum by CPA Executive Secretary Jay Lovestone announces (falsely, in accordance with a erroneous anticipatory cable dispatched from Moscow by arch-factionalista Jim Cannon): “The Executive Committee of the Communist International has carefully considered the situation prevailing in our party and the new problems arising out of the tactics pursued by our party to date. It has decided to send back to American Com. James Cook [Jim Cannon], now representing our party on the Executive Committee of the Communist International, member of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, and member of the Presidium of the Red Trade Union International with full instructions and detailed reports for our party adopted by the Communist International.” This ECCI discussion never happened, Cannon was never dispatched to America with instructions, and the rival Goose Caucus won the day at the forthcoming Bridgman Convention, deposing Lovestone as Executive Secretary (for Jakira) and Cannon as representative to ECCI (for Katterfeld) and RILU (for Swabeck).

“Railroad Men! Act Against the Traitors to Labor.” [United Toilers of America] [July 31, 1922] In addition to its English and Russian official organs, the United Toilers of America, “Legal Political Organization” of the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition, issued targeted newspapers in support of the strikes of the Railroad Shopmen and Miners in the summer of 1922. This article from the 2nd issue of the UTA’s “Railroad Strike Bulletin” urges the railroad workers to make the strike of the shopmen general across the railroad industry. The Maintenance of Way union and the powerful railroad brotherhoods must be appealed to, for unless they would join the shopmen today, they would face defeat in their own isolated actions tomorrow, the article asserts. “The rank and file of all the railroad unions, with the exception of here and there a fossilized conductor or engineer, is anxious to get into the fight and to teach the railroad barons that they cannot crush labor,” the article declares; to this are opposed the “reactionary officialdom” of the brotherhoods, exemplified by the “reptile and mountebank fakir” head of the Firemen and Enginemen, Robertson, and others of similar ilk. “We, the rank and file, must act and act decisively to bring all the workers on the railroads under the strike banner in order to once and for all teach the arrogant exploiters and robbers that we will not accept any conditions they desire to impose upon us. The strike must be broadened; the picket line must be extended to stop every wheel that turns on the railroads of the United States,” the article declares.

AUGUST

“An Anarchist on Russia: A Reply to Emma Goldman,” by William D. Haywood [August 1922] “Big Bill” Haywood takes aim at Anarchist Emma Goldman, writing for the New York World from exile in Soviet Russia. Haywood calls her series of anti-Communist articles “mendacious in thought, malicious in intent, but relevant in purpose” and opines that “it is

Emma's desire to return to the United States, where she enjoyed the plaudits of an adolescent audience." Haywood notes that Goldman "is not angry at the United States, which she says 'robbed her of her home and hearth,' but is viciously mad at Soviet Russia, which gave her admittance, employment, shelter, and sustenance. Is her reward to the Soviet government any less than ingratitude?" He calls her an "egotist" intent upon peddling "malignant attacks on Russia" to the "mongers of sensationalism" in the press. Haywood quotes an extensive passage from a letter of Leon Trotsky to support his assessment of Goldman. Trotsky calls Goldman's peace commentary on the Brest-Litovsk peace "childish prattle" and answers it at considerable length. He also cites Lucy Parsons, widow of the Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons, who is said to have "severely" criticized Goldman "because she sold herself to the capitalist press of the United States" and for offering up what was effectively "a rehash of the supercilious vaporings of capitalist reporters."

"Manifesto of the United Toilers of America to the Miners, Marine, & Transport Workers of the World." [Aug. 5, 1922]

In the 17th week of the bitter strike of the coal miners, the "legal political organization" of the Central Caucus-CPA Opposition issued this manifesto calling for workers in the marine and transport industries to expand the strike to prevent defeat of the miners' action. With the decision of the Railway Shopmen to strike in July, "the shutdown is now complete; the demands of industry in this country will force the coal barons to yield to the demands of the miners—UNLESS FOREIGN COAL CAN BE OBTAINED!" the manifesto declares. However, "there have been many transports loaded with cargoes of coal from Europe landed at American ports. The ruling class is jubilant. The coal famine can be postponed if only they can continue the steady influx of foreign coal. The ruling class of Britain is working hand in hand with the ruling class of the United States to defeat the miners here... If they can crush the American mine workers now, the same combination of predatory fiends will crush you later." The UTA exhorts transport workers to "rally to the support of the struggling miners of the United States of America" and to "smash the international conspiracy against labor with the United Front of the Working Class" by shutting down the effort to use foreign coal to defeat the American miners.

"Questions to Debs," by J. Louis Engdahl [Aug. 3, 1922] This is a pointed and aggressive open letter to Eugene V. Debs by the editor of *The Worker*, a former longtime associate of Debs in the Socialist Party. Engdahl rebukes Debs for heeding a request of Socialist Revolutionary Party leader Victor Chernov and sending a cable to Lenin in Moscow with which Debs joined the international chorus of voices demanding leniency in sentencing of the accused in the 1922 show trial of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Adapting an article from *International Press Correspondence* for his purposes, Engdahl presents a veritable laundry list of transgressions against the revolution by the PSR, including assassinations plotted and committed, bombings, acceptance of financial and military aid from foreign powers, collaboration with counterrevolutionary peasant movements (Antonov) and the installation of neo-monarchist military dictators (Kolchak), and publication of documents calling for armed revolt against the Soviet regime. Engdahl declares that "The history of the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution showed the Communists too gentle with their force-loving adversaries. The Bolsheviks were not in love with the use of force. They used it only when necessary to win and preserve the

workers' revolution. The Proletarian Dictatorship is still fighting for its life in Soviet Russia. It has only reached the doorstep of Communism. Capitalism throughout the world, aided and abetted by the Chernovs, has made war, is making war, and will continue to make war to its last breath against the emancipating rule of Russia's workers. But Communism replies to Capitalism with its own weapons, the only weapons Capitalism knows, and with the spread of the social revolution over the world, the workers everywhere are compelled to take their stand." Engdahl notes that a copy of the communication to Debs and invited Debs' reply for publication in *The Worker*.

"Communists in the Labor Unions," by William F. Dunne [Aug. 5, 1922] A very concise statement of one of the two primary factional visions of the American Communist movement in the 1920s—the "unionist" perspective associated with William Z. Foster and James P. Cannon. Dunne states that radical political movements have historically been populated by "intellectuals" with a "disposition for study and leisure to indulge it." This group felt that in their book-learning "they hold the key to all the problems that bedevil the workers" and that they were consequently impatient and contemptuous of the working class and its "endless struggle for more bread and butter." As a result, "until recently almost all revolutionary political movements were of a sectarian character." The Russian Revolution "upset all the established theories of revolutionary tactics" and demonstrated the importance of day-to-day struggles of the working class in the transition to socialism, however. Dunne states that radical intellectuals gained a "new humility" in the wake of Russian events and began to make contact with the working class, a turn for the better. The intellectuals could not assume an automatic right to lead the working class based upon their theoretical capacity, however: "There is no magic in the word Communism that will cause the workers to rally to its standard. The service that the Communists render to the labor movement will be the yardstick by which the workers will measure the value of the Communist Party, and it is tht alone that will determine its influence in the class struggle in the United States," Dunne argues. Dunne notes that some Communists are more apt at theory and others at tactical matters—that very few are skilled in both aspects. Party workers with "special ability for industrial work" need to be trained and made more effective and "the best brains and courage of the labor movement" must be integrated into the Communist Party to build an effective and powerful political organization, in Dunne's view.

"Workers Party Convention Picks List of Candidates." [Aug. 5, 1922] The Workers Party of America was founded at a convention held in New York in the last days of December 1921. It did not take long for the party to run a slate of candidates for elected office. This is the list of nominees of the party put forward by a city convention of the WPA held by Local Greater New York. The number of candidates running was impressive and many of the names recognizable, including: Elmer T. Allison, Israel Amter, Henry Askeli, I.B. Bailin, Solon DeLeon, William F. Dunne, Max Eastman, Benjamin Gitlow, Jacob Hartman, Louis Hendin, Otto Huiswood, Noah London, Ludwig Lore, Jay Lovestone, Tom O'Flaherty, Juliet S. Poyntz, J.B. Salutsky, Alexander Trachtenberg, William Weinstone, J. Wilenkin, and Harry Winitsky

"Agenda for the Second Convention of the unified Communist Party of America. Bridgman, Michigan—August 17-22, 1922." Traditional histories of the early CPA harp on

the “atonal singing society” which met in secret at the “Wulfskeel farm,” their heavily-accented voices raving madly amidst the droning of the crickets. The reality of the Bridgman convention was far less melodramatic and farcical. It was, in fact, a working unity convention of the CPA, dealing with fundamental issues of party policy, which met at the secluded summer resort camp of Karl Wulfskeel near the shore of Lake Michigan. This is the pre-convention agenda upon which the group based its work. A report of the CEC was delivered, debate on of the line of the 3rd Congress of the Comintern and its subsequent decisions on the American situation, and discussions held on the contemporary political situation within the communist movement, the legal political organization, the trade unions, unemployment, the YCL, the “negro question,” famine relief, imperialism, the language federations, and a host of other topics, concluding in the election of a new Central Executive Committee. The proceedings were interrupted by a police raid on the morning of August 22—the federal authorities tipped off by a professional spy in the ranks of the delegates.

“Kidnap Foster in Colorado! Secretary of the Trade Union Educational League Driven from Rockefeller-Owned State as “Undesirable.” [Events of Aug. 6-7, 1922] On the evening of Monday, August 6, 1922, William Z. Foster was taken from his hotel in Denver, Colorado without cause or warrant by three state policemen. He was transported to jail in a town 20 miles away and held there incommunicado overnight. The next day he was driven across the Wyoming state line and turned over to the sheriff of Cheyenne, Wyoming who in turn drove him about 75 miles up northeast from Cheyenne, dumping him along the road outside of Torrington, WY, about 10 miles from the Nebraska border. This is the initial report of this illegal incident published on the front page of the Workers Party’s weekly organ, *The Worker*. The story quotes the words of the man responsible for this action, Colorado Adjutant General Pat Hamrock, who said that in this case “no law was consulted.” Instead, this illegal arrest and jailing of Foster was deemed to be “for the best interests of the state,” in the words of the Adjutant General.

“W.Z. Foster, ‘Pursued in Michigan,’ Wasn’t There: ‘Truckload of Literature’ Proves Two Small Record Files and Thus Capitalist Journalism Scores Twice,” by Carl Haessler [Aug. 25, 1922] This Federated Press news report mocks the assertion of Michigan authorities that union leader William Z. Foster had attended and addressed the underground convention of the Communist Party of America, held Aug. 17-22, 1922 near Bridgman. “At the moment that the raiders were stated by the newspapers to have been closing in on an alleged Communist convention in Berrien County, Mich., Foster was in the Cook County courthouse in conference with Assistant State’s Attorney Jonas. He was attempting to obtain the return of the records taken from the office of the Trade Union Educational League in a raid the night of Aug. 20 [1922],” Haessler asserts. Haessler calls news reports in the bourgeois press that Foster had attended the Michigan Communist convention “lurid” and “fairy tales.” Haessler asserts that the Aug. 20 raid on the TUEL office had been grossly misreported, that only “two small record files were taken” and that it was believed that “the real purpose of the raid was to embarrass the national conference of the league scheduled for Saturday [Aug. 26, 1922].” Includes also excerpts from the reporting of the Bridgman raid published in the Chicago Tribune and filed by United Press International—held up by Haessler for ridicule but actually more reflective of reality than Haessler’s erroneous assertion that Foster had not been present.

“Decisions of the Second Annual Convention.” [August 22, 1922] A formal set of convention theses adopted by the delegates to the August 1922 Second Convention of the unified CPA, held at Wolfskeel Resort outside of Bridgman, Michigan. In addition to the all-important decision to retain the underground form of organization for the CPA, and to continue the underground party’s control over the Workers Party of America, the delegates established a new layer of decision-making authority—a “Party Council” consisting of members of the CEC and District representatives (with voice and vote) and Federation Secretaries (with voice not vote). This group, somewhat akin to the “National Committee” of the Socialist Party of America, was to meet three times a year to direct general party policy, its decisions only valid upon ratification by the CEC. The Party Council was to retain supreme authority in one function, to formally ratify the expulsion decisions of the CEC—a task akin to that of the short-lived “Board of Appeals” of the SPA. The Bridgman Convention also set the CPA the task of redoubling its effort in the trade union movement, stating that “Every member of the Party must not only be a member of a trade union, but it at all possible must become a leader in these organizations.” Work was to be carried out for amalgamation of unions when conditions were ripe, but the formation of a federation of independent unions in opposition to the AF of L was declared to be “harmful.” Contradictory action was taken on inner-party factions, “caucuses” and “caucus discipline” being declared on the one hand to be “formally forbidden” and to be “met with disciplinary measures”—but CEC composition mandated to include both “majority” and “minority” factional representation on the other. Factionalism was thus simultaneously formally banned but recognized and rewarded by the gathering.

“Communique to the Membership of the Communist Party of America from Ludwig E. Katterfeld for the CEC, [circa August 24, 1922].” This is a first statement to the membership of the unified CPA from it’s governing Central Executive Committee about its ill-fated 2nd Convention, held at Bridgman, Michigan from Aug. 17-22, 1922 and raided by the local constabulary with the prodding of federal authorities. Katterfeld paints the Bridgman convention in a positive light, stating “the most essential tasks of the convention wer completed. The issues that the convenvion was called to settle were settled satisfactorily. The strife that has torn our ranks the past months should now cease, and all should united in strengthening our #1 [CPA] to meet the onslaughts of the common foe.” The documents of the convention had been referred to the CEC for final writing and details would be forthcoming. As for the police raid, the membership was cautioned “Don’t believe ALL that you read in the Press. Remember that newspaper writers have fertile imaginations, especially when we are concernned. Do not let yourselves be stampeded with wild rumors.... Be extra careful, of course. Use new meeting places, but KEEP ON meeting regularly, and do not let your care interfere with the work of reaching the masses.”

“Foster’s Own Story: Kidnapping and Deportation Act of Revenge for Striking Rockefeller Steel Plant 100%,” by William Z. Foster [Events of Aug. 6-7, 1922] On the evening of Monday, August 6, 1922, William Z. Foster was taken from his hotel in Denver, Colorado without cause or warrant by three state policemen. He was transported to jail in a

town 20 miles away and held there incommunicado overnight. The next day he was driven across the Wyoming state line and turned over to the sheriff of Cheyenne, Wyoming who in turn drove him about 75 miles up northeast from Cheyenne, dumping him along the road outside of Torrington, WY, about 10 miles from the Nebraska border. This is Foster's first-hand account of his ordeal, emphasizing the fact that his was a case of interstate kidnapping at the behest of moneyed powers. "Though few, no doubt, are childish enough to expect justice to be done in the situation, yet at least, all may look for the crooked authorities of Colorado and Wyoming to be compelled to break a few more laws in their efforts to cover up their illegality in this kidnapping affair. It will be one more occasion to show the class character of present day society," Foster states.

"The State of Colorado: An Editorial from *The Worker*, Aug. 26, 1922" by J. Louis Engdahl [Events of Aug. 6-7, 1922] Commentary in the pages of the official organ of the Workers Party of America on the kidnapping and expulsion of William Z. Foster from the states of Colorado and Wyoming. The connection of the man behind the operation with previous illegal atrocities committed against the labor movement is made plain: "Adjutant General Pat Hamrock was with the fiend Lieutenant Linderfelt when the latter brutally murdered the Greek coal mine leader, Louis Tikas, striking him dead with the butt end of his gun. Hamrock was in command at Bloody Ludlow. At that time he was a 'major.' But that was nearly ten years ago. He is now 'Adjutant General.' The Rockefeller-owned Colorado, of brute capitalist force, has rewarded him handsomely." This connection is illustrative, Engdahl indicates, and the prescription clear: "If a few more thousands of workers in Colorado will learn this lesson of the bitter struggle of capitalism against labor then Foster will not regret the attack that was made upon him.... Let labor's answer to the state of Colorado and its Adjutant General be hundreds of thousands of members for the Trade Union Educational League."

"A Reply to Debs," by J. Louis Engdahl [Aug. 26, 1922] Rejoinder by the Editor of *The Worker* to Theodore Debs' "Answer from Debs" of August 9, 1922. Engdahl backs away from his implication that Eugene Debs is in the camp of the international counterrevolutionary movement and instead dismisses him as a wavering pacifist. Engdahl states that it was easy for the pacifist humanitarian Debs to be anti-war; the acid test of "his standing as a revolutionist came in 1920, when, as the Presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, he declared, 'I am a Socialist, not a Communist.'" Engdahl sates that while the Bolsheviks have desired peace, "the Socialist (Counter-)Revolutionaries, with their party, stood on the side of capitalist oppression, and they must suffer the consequences." He continues that "Capitalist nations may rest upon their arms for recuperation between wars and wax merciful for a time toward war objectors, toward pacifists. But there is no letup in the class war until the social revolution has spread to every land and established its victory without dispute. Then, with the inauguration of a Communist Society, mercy and humanity will come into their own, not because there were those who sympathized with Lenin or Trotsky, or any other revolutionary leaders, but because the world heard the tramp of millions ready to give their all, their lives, for the winning of the New Day."

"Smash Radical Nest Near Bridgman; 15 Reds Seized: Break Up Convention of 75

Communist Chieftains: Foster and Two Lenin Aides Flee County During Night.” [Aug. 22, 1922] An invaluable piece of unsigned reportage from the St. Joseph [MI] daily newspaper giving the complete account of the raid of the Bridgman convention—written by a reporter who was taken along to witness the proceeding and published on the same day of the raid. Includes a list of those arrested, a list of those participating in the arrest, and details of the operation itself—along with a grainy photograph of the man in charge of the operation, Sheriff George Bridgman. An extremely important primary source on the history of the sensational 1922 Bridgman raid.

“Papers Taken in Raid Show Plan of Reds: Destruction of American Government, Aim of Communists.” [Aug. 22, 1922] Unsigned reportage from the local St. Joseph, Michigan daily newspaper initially reporting the contents of documents seized in neighboring Bridgman from the convention of the underground Communist Party of America held there. Includes quotations from a memo in the handwriting of C.E. Ruthenberg on the revolutionary aims of the Communist Party.

“Foster Arrested in Chicago: 15 Radicals To Stand Trial in Berrien; Two To Be Deported.” [Aug. 23, 1922] Unsigned reportage from the St. Joseph [Michigan] Herald-Press updating its readers about the ongoing saga of the raid of the Bridgman Communist Convention. In addition to the 15 captured in the raid, Norman Tallentire and Eugene Bechtold were added to the list of those in custody, the article indicates, as well as William Z. Foster, arrested 90 minutes down the road from Bridgman in his hometown of Chicago. Proprietor of the Wolfskeel Resort, Karl Wolfskeel, had been questioned and cleared of formal connection with the Communists and a representative of the Michigan Central Railroad’s police was in town attempting to link the Communists with an Aug. 20 wreck of an express train, the article indicated.

“Seek \$160,000 in Bonds from Reds: Scores Follow Radical Parade to Courtroom: Deputy Goes to Lansing to Extradite Foster, Red Chief.” [Aug. 24, 1922] Unsigned contemporary news account from the daily newspaper serving St. Joseph/Benton Harbor/Bridgman, Michigan. This article reports the march of 16 Bridgman prisoners, handcuffed in pairs, “under the broiling sun” from the county jail in which they had been held to the Berrien Co. Courthouse for hearing on bail. C.E. Ruthenberg, speaking on behalf of all the defendants, stated that the group had not been allowed to consult with their attorney prior to the bail hearing. Bail was set at \$10,000 per defendant and the group was led back to the county jail under armed guard. Also includes news of the arrest of William Z. Foster in Chicago just 25 minutes after a warrant was issued for his arrest in Michigan. Foster was held incommunicado at Cook Co. jail while extradition papers were being obtained from the state capital in Lansing.

“Letter to Rachele Ragozin in Brooklyn from C.E. Ruthenberg in St. Joseph, MI, August 29, 1922.” Freed on bail in April 1922 after more than 18 months behind bars, Workers Party of American Executive Secretary would remain free barely more than four more

months before he was once again embroiled in the legal system -- this time facing allegations of having violated the Michigan state "Criminal Syndicalism" law for having attended the convention of the underground Communist Party of America held at Bridgman, Michigan. In this letter to his girlfriend, Rachele Ragozin, Ruthenberg discusses the need to raise the \$10,000 bail on which he is held. Held away from his imprisoned comrades, Ruthenberg immediately lapses into the placid "prison state of mind" which he had only recently exhibited in hundreds of pages of love letters exchanged with Ragozin.

"Organization Adjustment: A Memo on the Creation of the Post of Federation

Director," by C.E. Ruthenberg [circa late August 1922] During its final phase in the aftermath of the August 1922 Bridgman Convention, the underground Communist Party of America made an effort to centralize the operations of its 16 language federations through increased reporting and joint meetings of the heads of each federation with the newly established representative of the party's CEC, the Federation Director. This communique from Executive Secretary, C.E. Ruthenberg details the changes in the CPA's structure and procedure surrounding this short-lived organizational change.

SEPTEMBER

"Decisions of the Second Annual Convention of the Communist Party of America:

Bridgman, MI—Aug. 17-22, 1922." Published summary of the decisions of the ill-fated 1922 Bridgman Convention of the Communist Party of America: 1. Trade Unions: "The work in the trade unions must be increased tenfold. Every member of the Party must not only be a member of a trade union, but if at all possible must become a leader in these organizations." 2. Open v. Underground Party: "The illegal Communist Party of America has no prospects in the near future of becoming a legal party, and therefore the underground party is and remains the only Section of the Communist International in the United States. Should conditions change, and should the Communist Party of America become an open, "legal," party, even then it will, like the other legal Communist Parties, need an underground apparatus for special purposes. But whether the Party is legal or illegal, the center of gravity of the activities of the Communist Party of America is in the open work..." 3. Program of Legal Party: "The dictatorship of the working class through Soviets must be shown as the historic form in which the victory of the working class has up to the present time manifested itself." 4. The Opposition: "It is possible and desirable to bring about full Communist unity by bringing back into the Party the Opposition, on the basis of the decisions of the CI.... All measures shall be taken in agreement with the representative of the Communist International [Valetski]." 5. Party Discussions: "Discussions of controversial questions may be accompanied by a simultaneous discussion in the Party press, or they may not, just as the CEC decides. Under no consideration can an editor take the initiative to open discussion in any Party paper on any controversial question in the Party." 6. Caucuses: "According to the explicit declarations of the 3rd World Congress of the Communist International, the formation of caucuses within the Party is formally forbidden." 7. Liquidation of the Underground Apparatus: "The Communist Party of America must continue to exist as an underground party. Its main task consists in the open work, especially through the LPP and the trade unions. Should conditions change and the possibility of an open Communist Party arise,

then a convention of the Communist Party alone can decide.” 8. Party Council: “The Party Council consists of the Central Executive Committee members and of one Party Council member from each Party District or from a combination of Districts as designated by the Convention.” 9. CEC Composition: “According to the Thesis on Organization of Communist Parties adopted by the 3rd World Congress of the Communist International, the majority of the Central Executive Committee must reflect the majority of the Party Convention. But also the minority of the Party Convention must be reflected by a minority representation in the Central Executive Committee.”

“Report of [1922 Bridgman CPA] Convention.” [events of Aug. 17-22, 1922] This unsigned official account of the 1922 Bridgman Convention is decidedly more positive than the frustrated analysis of CI Rep Genrik Valetski. Mention of the police raid which was to embroil the party for the next year is understated and the analysis of the gathering upbeat: “Unforeseen circumstances made it necessary to condense the convention deliberations within a shorter time than anticipated. And yet at no Communist convention in America has so much constructive work been accomplished.” Although it is noted that no caucuses would henceforth be permitted within the party, it is simultaneously remarked that “from the very beginning of the convention, a tendency to caucuses was manifest. A majority caucus representing those contending against a tendency which they regarded as leading toward the liquidation of the underground party was formed and remained the majority of the convention. The second caucus was a looser aggregation and embraced those who declared there were no liquidators in the Party and others who for different reasons remained outside the majority caucus.” William Z. Foster addressed the gathering about the turbulent situation in the American trade union movement. “Against this review of possibilities of revolutionary work in the trade unions was cited the appalling fact that only 5% of the Party membership is actively engaged in trade union work,” it is noted. The previously negotiated agreement of the factional “Disarmament Committee” was unanimously approved by the convention and a new 11 member CEC elected (2 unanimous choices, 6 from the “Anti-Liquidation” majority caucus, and 3 from the “Independent” minority caucus) to which was joined the representative of the Young Communist League, “as in international usage.”

“Manifesto of the Communist Party of America to the Workers of the United States.” [Sept. 4, 1922] This massive Labor Day 1922 missive of the Communist Party of America answers charges made in the wake of recent raids on the conventions of the party and Trade Union Educational League that the Communist movement represented a secret underground terrorist conspiracy. Pointing out the organization’s origins as an “open party” in 1919, the manifesto declares “It is only the brutal persecution that has driven us underground.” An exit from this ongoing situation was clearly sought by the organization, which asserts the desire “to do everything in our power that will enable us to participate openly in political life.” It is branded “an infamous lie” that the Communists were planners of “campaigns of bomb throwing, dynamiting, and sabotage.” Quite to the contrary, the manifesto declares, the party remains “in principle opposed to all such individual actions — instead of action of the masses — not because we want to save the capitalists, but because we know that all such terroristic acts are ineffective and would serve to confuse the working masses, poison public opinion against the workers’ cause, and would afford the capitalist government an excuse to proceed against the workers.” This said, the manifesto is unflinching about the ultimate necessity of force in the

coming revolution proclaiming: "We know very well that capitalism cannot be abolished without the use of force. The capitalist magnates will hand over power to the workers only as willingly and as peacefully as the British Crown and Feudal Forces handed it over to the American bourgeoisie in 1776, and as peacefully and as willingly as the Southern slaveowners freed the Negro slaves in the Civil War." A call is made for a "United Front against all political persecution," for mass mobilization on behalf of civil rights and the labor movement, and for establishment of "a political party of the workers entirely independent of the capitalist parties."

"Communists Explain Raids: Declare They Have Nothing to Conceal and Urge Working Class to Unite Its Forces,"

by Jack Carney [Sept. 8, 1922] Although he falsely pleads that his "Voice of Labor is NOT a Communist weekly," editor Jack Carney provides one of the first official CPA statements about the police raid of its national convention on Aug. 22, 1922, in Bridgman, Michigan. Carney extensively quotes a statement by the governing Central Executive Committee of the CPA, which declares: "We are revolutionists and not bomb throwers. We want to destroy the whole building of capitalist society and not the building of some railway station." Carney states that the CPA particularly protested about being characterized by the raiders in the press as a "small, sinister band in ambush." The statement of the CEC continues: "Why then an underground? Simply because the capitalists compel us to be an underground party." Carney indicates that the Communists "declare their willingness to fight in the open, but only the brutal persecution of the capitalists has driven them underground." The CEC statement continues: "The workers of America must understand that the fate of the working class and the fate of the Communists are inseparable. This is self-evident. The Communists are not a group separate or indistinct from the working class. They are an integral part of the working class. The Communists are those workers who are conscious of the fact that in the struggle against the capitalist the workers must organize as a class." An appeal is made to the workers to unite against "our common enemy" and to protest the persecution of the Communist Party.

"A View of Our Party Condition: Extract from Report of the Representative of the Communist International to the Presidium of the CI,"

by Genrik Valetski [keying on events of Aug. 17-22, 1922] Extended extract of a report to ECCI from the Comintern's Rep in America, Genrik Valetski. Valetski reports on the recently completed Bridgman Convention of the CPA [Aug. 17-22]. During the pre-convention period, factional warfare had erupted, infighting which "prevailed over everything else, and it was apparent to every impartial witness that the danger of a new split had become imminent. Both factions were either firmly organized or in the process of organization." With a formal split in the offing, CI Rep Valetski intervened, stating that he rejected an attempt by one faction to postpone the convention and "demanded that the CEC immediately elect a Commission to discuss all the controversial questions and endeavor to find a common ground on which to restore the Party unity." An "Adjustment Commission" (a.k.a. "Disarmament Commission") was named by the CEC, consisting of 8 members representing all factions and the 3 representatives from abroad (Valetski, Boris Reinstein, John Pepper). A dozen meetings were held by this body and a set of 10 resolutions were unanimously agreed upon—it was this agreement that was taken to the convention, where it was unanimously ratified. Valetski provides probably the best participant's account of the nuts and bolts of the Bridgman Convention, an event at which deep factional divisions were apparent and time was needlessly consumed on internal wrangling. During this time of factional

fisticuffs, Valetski tells ECCI that “I did not assume the role of a pacifier or arbiter, but, on the contrary, openly combatted everything that, in my opinion, represented witch-hunting or a political judgment or standpoint in the Theses published.” The decision for the CPA to remain an underground organization was adopted by the convention unanimously, Valetski reveals.

“The Convention Has Spoken,” unsigned lead article from The Communist [circa Sept. 1, 1922] This lead article in the official organ of the unified CPA announces the decision of the 2nd Convention (held in Aug. 1922 at Bridgman, Michigan) on the central question of whether the CPA should remain an underground organization or whether the underground organization should liquidate itself in favor of a fully legal organizational existence. While acknowledging that “the underground form or the open form of a revolutionary party is determined by existing conditions which may vary from time to time and from country to country,” the lead article states authoritatively that “under the conditions that exist at the present time and which will exist for some time to come, the Communist Party of America must continue to be an underground party.” Despite the continuation of the underground form of organization, the article further indicates that “the struggle of the working class is essentially in all its stages an open struggle,” and that thus the organization must maintain its “center of gravity in open work.” In addition to this decision on organizational form and emphasis, a new feature of party ideology emerges here, a sort of “iron law of factionalism.” The lead article states that “to accomplish its task the Party must apply itself as a unit. Factions, though they may originate in conscientious efforts to serve the cause and the Party, develop inevitably into conspiracies against the Party and its best interests.” The article declares that “The secret of success of any Communist Party is its compactness, its centralized machinery, its uniformity of action. Any factional organization inside of the Party makes impossible such uniformity of action and condemns the Party to the existence of a paralytic.”

“Letter to Rachele Ragozin in Brooklyn from C.E. Ruthenberg in St. Joseph, MI, Sept. 15-16, 1922.” Himself free on bond following his August 22 arrest at the Bridgman, Michigan convention of the underground Communist Party of America, C.E. Ruthenberg details the progress being made toward bailing out all the remaining jailed Communists. Bill Foster and Max Lerner had been freed on Sept. 15, Ruthenberg notes, leaving 12 behind bars. A Detroit connection pledging \$100,000 to the bail effort was moving forward, Ruthenberg notes — an amount which would be sufficient to free all but one. Ruthenberg mentions the establishment of a new mass organization formed around the issue of legal defense of the Bridgman defendants, the Labor Defense Council, which he says includes participants from the Socialist, Workers, Farmer-Labor, and Proletarian Parties, as well as the Communists’ Trade Union Educational League and various unions. A national office is to be established September 18, Ruthenberg notes, adding: “I think it will be a big thing.”

“15,000 Russians Plan Return to First Workers’ Republic to Give Aid to the Revival and Development of Agriculture.” [Sept. 16, 1922] In the fall of 1922 the government of Soviet Russia partially lifted its ban on the return of expatriate Russian citizens, this article reveals. Coordinating its “re-immigration” efforts through the Society for Technical Aid to Soviet Russia, the Soviet government set aside 8 million acres of land for the establishment of model

collective farms by 15,000 returning Russians, who were to return and establish their farms by the Spring of 1923. "The condition for their admission into Soviet Russia is that they come organized into agricultural groups, communes, or collectives; that they come equipped, at their own expense, with tractors and modern agricultural machinery and implements, and that they be self-supporting for at least one year," the article indicates.

"Radical Leader to Stand Trial in Court Here: Twenty-Second Communist Falls Into Custody of the Law." [Sept. 12, 1922] Unsigned contemporary news account from the daily newspaper serving St. Joseph/Benton Harbor/Bridgman, Michigan. This article provides news of Foster's arraignment in Illinois just prior to extradition to Michigan, which was expected to be immediately forthcoming. Also includes information of the New York arrest of a 22nd Bridgman defendant—called "Anderson" by the federal agents and said to use the other pseudonyms "Griffith," "Collins," and "Stevens." The true identity of the detainee (Joseph Zack Kornfeder) is never mentioned in the article—seemingly the authorities had no clue themselves—but this did not stop Department of Justice agent Allen Myers (former head of the Bridgman operation) from proclaiming him "the most dangerous of all the Reds sought by the government in this country." So dangerous, indeed, that he "was sought by the federal agents for at least ten years, but always successfully eluded their search, until this week, when he was seized in New York." Why a manhunt for a person of unknown identity had been ongoing since 1912 or earlier and the reason why this mystery man was so dangerous is not explained in the article—which is fairly transparent as a DoJ effort at tainting the jury pool by means of a fallacious story planted in the media.

"The Michigan Raid." Unsigned news article in *The Worker*, Sept. 23, 1922. On the morning of Tuesday, Aug. 22, 1922, a large number of heavily-armed sheriff's deputies, detectives, and Department of Justice officials swooped in on the Wolfskeel Summer Resort near Bridgman, Michigan, and arrested 17 remaining members of the Communist Party of America (one of whom was a government agent-provocateur) in connection with a convention of the CPA held on those premises. It was not until a month later that this detailed account of the raid and its aftermath was published in the weekly organ of the Workers Party of America. It is interesting to note that even at this late date the party had not caught on that the "badly beaten" and released prisoner "Charles Ashworth" was DoJ agent Francis Morrow. Likely writer of the piece was the Managing Editor of *The Worker*, J. Louis Engdahl. The story attributes to DoJ agent Jacob Spolansky a statement that the Bridgman raid was related to the ongoing strike wave, particularly that of the railway shopmen. The article declares that not only the activities of union militants but the repressive actions of the state were welding together a "united front of labor."

"Workers! You Must Fight for Freedom! Manifesto of the Workers Party." [Sept. 23, 1922] In the aftermath of an injunction won against striking workers in the great railroad strike by Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty, the Workers Party of America amped up its political rhetoric. This manifesto to the American working class declares that "the injunction granted at Chicago will destroy the labor unions, if it is permitted to stand unchallenged." Rather than appeal in the courts, the demand here is for mass action: "The general strike is the only effective answer which Labor can make to the attack of the Daugherty injunction," the

manifesto declares. Establishment of a Labor Defense Council for legal defense, conceived of as a mass organization which “should include representatives of every part of the working class and of every group ready to enter the struggle to preserve the freedom of the American people.” With the Republican administration moving towards establishment of the open shop, breaking the rail strike in the courts, and attacking the Communist Party through its mass arrests of participants at the Bridgman Convention in August, the American labor movement was facing its greatest moment of crisis in 25 years, the manifesto intimates.

“The General Strike is Dead! Long Live the General Strike!” by J. Louis Engdahl [Sept. 23, 1922] Almost as quick as it was started, the American Communist movement ended its agitation for a general strike in response to Harry Daugherty’s injunction obtained in the railroad strike. Indeed, this manifesto to American workers was published in the very same issue of *The Worker* as the official manifesto of the Central Executive Committee of the WPA calling for a general strike. At root in this about-face seems to have been the refusal of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to advance the call for a general strike, leaving the Communists generals without an army. Engdahl notes that the AF of L leadership, instead of embracing worker militancy “are trying to interest you in fake ‘impeachment proceedings’ against Daugherty, in per capita taxes for the relief of the striking shopmen that will never be collected, specious plans for curtailing the power of the US Supreme Court, and ‘new legislation’ for Congress to pass and the sacred cows of the Supreme Court to chew to bits.” The cause of the Trade Union Education League for organization of the unorganized and amalgamation of existing craft unions into class-conscious industrial unions is espoused by Engdahl as the key to making the tool of the general strike effective in the future.

“Letter to Rachele Ragozin in Brooklyn from C.E. Ruthenberg in Boston, Sept. 24, 1922.” This mundane correspondence between C.E. Ruthenberg and his girlfriend Rachele Ragozin is actually quite illuminating as a demonstration of the qualities that made him an effective Executive Secretary throughout his career in the Communist movement — with even his factional opponents attesting to his competence and ability and willing to leave him in place when they had control of the apparatus. Ruthenberg’s business school training is evident as he outlines specific issues and tasks for an accounting of the party’s books. Ragozin’s place as assistant and helpmate is also evident in this rather banal document.

Survey of the Present Political Situation in America: Manifesto of the Communist Party of America.” [Sept. 28, 1922] A rare post-Bridgman statement of the underground CPA, Abram Jakira Executive Secretary. The situation has changed for the worse, in the estimate of the CPA, with the coal strike ended via a sweeping injunction while the AF of L failed to back up its previous posturing in favor of a General Strike and meekly acquiesced. The Executive Council of the AF of L came out against a Labor Party and confirmed the expulsion of the New York Bookkeepers, Accountants, and Stenographers’ Union for its alleged radicalism. “At a time when solidarity and unity of labor’s ranks should be fostered, in order that the fight against the employers may be conducted with concentrated energy, the AF of L acts to split the ranks of the workers,” the manifesto charges. In addition, the railway shopmen’s strike was terminated with little gained save a nominal defeat of the open shop movement. The betrayal of the United Front campaign of the WPA, SLP, and SPA by the Socialist Party in Rhode Island is detailed. These strike failures and the poor and demoralizing performance of the AF of L have

caused a rise in rank and file discontent, in the view of the manifesto's author: "The workers, furthermore, also are voicing a demand for independent political action. The betrayal of the capitalist parties has become apparent." To this end "the conference which is to be held in Chicago in December [Conference for Progressive Political Action] becomes one of the most important events in the life of labor in America. Should a genuine Labor Party be formed of these organized labor bodies, a new factor of great vigor and tremendous possibilities would enter the American political arena.... The potentialities of this mass organization are gigantic."

"A View on the Former Opposition and Our Present Unity: Second Extract from Report of the Representative of the Communist International to the Presidium of the CI," by Genrik Valetski ("Wilke") [circa Sept. 30, 1922] In his second published report to the Executive Committee of the Communist International, CI Rep Genrik Valetski details unity negotiations with "The Opposition"—previously known as the "Central Caucus" from September 1921 until about the first 1922, and calling themselves as the legitimate "Communist Party of America" from the time of their "Emergency Conference" held Jan. 7-12, 1922 until the Comintern ruled against them and forced them to stop using such a characterization towards March. This Central Caucus-CPA-Opposition group contained a significant percentage of the old CPA, forced into unity with the United Communist Party in a shotgun wedding held at Woodstock, NY in May 1921. When Valetski first arrived in the US in mid-May 1922, he states the members of the Opposition's 4 member unity committee "were irreconcilable, repeated the 'conditions' laid down by their organization in May [1922] after the return of Moore [John Ballam]), the most important of which was the expulsion of the 'liquidators,' and attacked the Party most violently." Valetski states that he "rejected the 'conditions' as not even to be discussed" and "took pains to demonstrate to them the hopelessness of their existence as a separate organization..." Valetski provides the important detail that the CC-CPA-Opposition contained about 2,500 members at the time, while its "legal organization," called the United Toilers of America, had about 1,200. Valetski provides the best (and only?) account of the Central Caucus-Opposition's September 1922 convention, at which the question of unity was mooted. The convention had divided along factional lines, with a 12-9 majority initially opposing "unconditional surrender" by amalgamating on the Comintern's terms. Only extreme pressure by the minority faction, threatening a split, had caused the matter to be reconsidered and unity achieved. Even then, 2 delegates remained irreconcilable [speculative guess: Boston Latvian Federationist A.S. Edwards and his wife, pseudonym "J. Davis"], voting against rejoining the CPA and presumably maintaining a separate underground existence as the underground "United Toilers" party. Valetski is satisfied that his efforts had saved thousands of sound Communists for the American movement.

OCTOBER

"Platform of the Workers Party: Congressional Election 1922." [circa Oct. 1922] In 1920 the American Communist movement boycotted the elections, in 1921 there was a campaign in New York City under the umbrella of "the Workers League." It was not until the fall election of 1922 that the Communists entered the electoral fray at the Congressional level, this time under the auspices of their "Legal Political Party" — the Workers Party of America. This is the Congressional campaign platform for that debut race, probably composed by C.E. Ruthenberg. It includes 14 "slogans of the immediate struggles," including among them the right of unions to

organize, strike, and picket; the unrestricted right of free speech, press, and assembly; elimination of anti-syndicalist laws; termination of “industrial courts” and “government by injunction”; protection of Negro lives and civil rights; a “four-fold” bonus to soldiers for lost wages; payment of union scale to the unemployed; withdrawal of troops from Latin America; non-intervention in the Near East; and the ubiquitous call for establishment of “trade relations and recognition of Soviet Russia.” The Socialist Party is attacked as an institution which “misleads the workers through its efforts to make them believe that the road to freedom lies through petty reforms achieved through the existing legislative bodies.” The WPA, on the other hand, “declares that the workers will free themselves from the exploitation and oppression which is their lot under the existing system of industries through the use of their mass power” to thereby “end the existing dictatorship of the capitalists” and establish “workers’ rule through a workers’ government.” Although “workers’ dictatorship” is explicitly advocated, the word “socialism” is never expressed as an objective nor any form of nationalization advocated as part of the 14 proposed “slogans of the immediate struggles” — a perplexing choice of which punch to pull in an effort to maintain the organization’s tenuous legality.

“Nine Questions and Eight Answers About the Michigan “Red Raid” Cases: A leaflet of the Labor Defense Council, circa Oct. 1922.” This leaflet was an early attempt by the Communist Party’s new defense organization, the Labor Defense Council, to build popular support and raise funds for the defendants of the police raid on the August 1922 Bridgman, Michigan, Convention of the CPA. The attack on the “constructive revolutionaries” at Bridgman was an attack on the labor movement itself, the leaflet indicates: “In looking over the records of these 19 labor militants, it is not difficult to imagine why these men have been singled out for persecution. When the employing class finds the time ripe for an attack on the labor movement, it is always the outstanding labor militants who have to bear the heaviest burden.” Includes short biographies of six leading defendants (Foster, Ruthenberg, Dunne, Krumbein, Harrison, and Browder—in that order) and union affiliations of 13 others. This version includes a contrived police propaganda photograph showing the notorious Bridgman defendants seated behind an array of typewriters and mimeograph machines—an image used with effect in another contemporary leaflet of the LDC.

“The Bankruptcy of the American Labor Movement,” by William Z. Foster [Oct. 1922] Full text of a pamphlet published by the Trade Union Educational League as No. 4 in its “Labor Herald Library” series, authored by the founder and secretary of the TUEL organization, William Z. Foster. Foster depicts the weak position of American unionism as a byproduct of the dual unionist tradition of the countries radical labor militants, who anathmetized the American Federation of Labor in favor of a series of ineffectual attempts to build an explicitly radical alternative. This strategy was wrong-headed, Foster argues, noting the unions congealed in the AF of L were actually “primitive but genuine attempts of an ignorant working class to organize and fight the exploiters that are harassing it.” It was the widespread perception among the militants that the AF of L was a hopelessly conservative, capitalist organization incapable of development that provided the prime explanation “why the Socialists did not invade the AF of L, depose the Gompers regime, and change the whole face of the labor movement twenty years ago.” Foster optimistically adds that “the new movement, as represented by the Trade Union Educational League, repudiates the conception, long a dogma of the dual unionists, that the trade unions are anchored to the principle of craft unionism and cannot develop into industrial

organizations.” This pamphlet includes a useful chapter in which Foster recounts his previous organizational activities as founder of the Syndicalist League of North America, the International Trade Union Educational League, and the TUEL itself.

“Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America: New York City—October 7, 1922.” These minutes of the governing CEC of the Workers Party give a further taste of C.E. Ruthenberg’s administrative expertise, in addition to filling in important detail about that WPA affairs. In months #6 through 9 of the WPA’s existence, the National Office’s expenditures increased to an average of nearly \$7500 per month from the \$4560 per month spent during its first 5 months of existence. Despite the spending increase, the organization’s monthly operating loss, which had averaged nearly \$2,000 a month in the initial phase, had been practically eliminated. While the party’s weekly English organ, *The Worker*, continued to rack up deficits, dues collections increased. In his Organizational Report to the CEC, Ruthenberg notes that a recent trip around the country had indicated to him that “it did not appear that the [Aug. 1922 Bridgman] raids had in any way affected the morale of the organization. Party work was going on everywhere and the members showing a fine spirit.” The CEC took a number of actions at this meeting, including most importantly the establishment of a negotiating committee of 3 to negotiate merger with remaining members of the Legal Political Party associated with the now-liquidated underground “Communist Party of America” of Central Caucus faction—the “United Toilers Party.” Harry Wicks of the UTP’s English organ, *The Workers’ Challenge*, was to be brought on board the editorial staff of *The Worker* after the liquidation of the UTP was complete, according to the recommendation of the WPA’s Political Committee. In additional action, the CEC elected Max Bedacht, Ludwig Katterfeld, and Alexander Trachtenberg as the WPA’s fraternal delegates to the forthcoming 4th Congress of the Communist International (which started Nov. 5, 1922). Earl Browder was named the representative of the WPA to the Young Workers League. The Political Committee’s idea to establish a research bureau in the National Office was endorsed in principle. The Political Committee was instructed to prepare a campaign against the Socialist Party.

“Workers Rally to Support of Victims of Michigan Raids.” [Oct. 14, 1922]. This unsigned news report from the pages of *The Worker* demonstrates the way the Law of Unintended Consequences came into play with regard to the August 1922 raid on the Bridgman Convention of the Communist Party of America. Going into the Bridgman convention the American Communist movement was shattered into three warring factions, membership had plummeted below the 5,000 mark, party finances teetered on the verge of bankruptcy, and the organization was cut off from contact and influence with the mainstream labor movement and the liberal intelligentsia. Far from delivering the knock-out punch which federal authorities intended, the Bridgman raid gave birth to a new and effective mass organization (the Labor Defense Council), garnered sympathy among many in the labor movement, and raised the Communist movement’s profile in American society by a factor of three. To capitalize on the prevailing public mood Bridgman defendants William Z. Foster and C.E. Ruthenberg were sent on the road on behalf of the Labor Defense Council to raise consciousness and funds. This article details a series of well-attended meetings in Toledo, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Youngstown at which the Party’s program of union amalgamation was advanced, new local chapters of the LDC were organized, and nearly \$1,000 collected for the Bridgman legal defense.

“For a Labor Party: Recent Revolutionary Changes in American Politics: A Statement by the Workers Party of America, Oct. 15, 1922,” by John Pepper. Full text of a rather long pamphlet published in this first edition by the Workers Party of America without authorship noted—two later editions attributed to the pen of John Pepper. The pamphlet argues that while most previous efforts have met with failure, the success of the Republican Party—originally a Third Party—in establishing itself proved that the Third Party tactic was viable. America as a nation was in the process of becoming ever more centralized and bureaucratized, tendencies favorable to the reshuffling of the political deck. A mass Labor Party was the answer—its long-term survival inexorably linked to actual union participation in the organization. The non-partisan “reward friends and punish enemies” orientation of Gompers’ AF of L was roundly criticized. Regardless of this line of the national trade union bureaucracy, State Federations of Labor around the country were standing up for a Labor Party and a national organization along those lines was in the offing.

“Exposes Third Degree: Lambkin Tells of Brutalities Following Arrest in Michigan Raid.” [Oct. 21, 1922] Cyril Lambkin, Detroit District Organizer for the Workers Party of America, was one of the 17 individuals arrested early in the morning of August 22, 1922, at the convention of the Communist Party at the Wolfskeel Summer Resort, near Bridgman, Michigan. This news report from the organ of the WPA, *The Worker*, quotes Lambkin’s affidavit detailing police brutality following his arrest: a blow to the hip, grilling by multiple federal agents, a slap to the face, being hurled into another room, and being pulled up from the floor by his hair.

“Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America: New York City—Oct. 21, 1922.” The Oct. 21, 1922 session of the CEC of the Workers Party of America saw an important move to restructure the organization’s administrative apparatus. On the motion of Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg, a new 7 member executive committee called the “Administrative Council” was created. Initial members elected to this body by the CEC were Elmer Allison, George Ashkenuzi, Alex Bittelman, Louis Engdahl, Ludwig Lore, Edward Lindgren, and C.E. Ruthenberg. The CEC was to meet at least once every 6 weeks in the future, with the Administrative Council meeting more frequently to handle the WPA’s operational affairs. This session of the CEC also voted to negotiate to take over the operation of the failing New York radical political and artistic magazine, *The Liberator*, with business management of the publication to be brought into the WPA National Office under the direction of Elmer Allison. On Allison’s initiative sales of English language party literature were to be centralized in the National Office as well, with district offices to be merely informed of sales to their district rather than serving as the actual conduit for literature distribution. Federations were to continue to be in charge of sale of party literature in their own national languages. The unity agreement reached with the now-defunct United Toilers Party was detailed, including a transfer of the subscription list of *Workers’ Challenge* to *The Worker*. In related action, editor Harry Wicks of *The Workers’ Challenge* was brought on board at *The Worker* as the publication’s new Labor Editor. An agenda prepared by the Political Committee for the forthcoming 2nd National Convention of the WPA, which was eventually held in Dec. 1922. The convention was to consist of 50 delegates and to be held in New York City, the CEC decided. The Political Committee’s proposal for the establishment of a Research Bureau in the

National Office was also formally approved by the CEC with Executive Secretary Ruthenberg instructed to set up the department; Jay Lovestone was soon appointed to head this new party bureau. The New York District Committee was instructed not to pursue its plan to write in WPA candidates in the November elections, as the CEC determined that only a weak showing for the party would result.

“Labor Liquidates Revolution,” by J.B. Salutsky. [October 1922] This article from the pages of *The Liberator* drew the intense wrath of WPA Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg. Salutsky, a late-comer to the Communist Movement from the ranks of the old Jewish Socialist Federation, was extremely hostile to underground conspiratorial structure, writing: “The Workers Party, hardly nine months after its inception, succeeded in earning the condemnation of all it set out to combat, which is proof positive that it was a hit rather than a miss.... It was the open communist fighting movement that the alliance of yellow and black hates and fears. Groups of ten are of no danger to anything except the aims they profess to be pursuing.” Conspiratorial revolutionism had been liquidated in the minds of organized labor in the wake of the Michigan raid, in Salutsky’s view. Instead, the need of the day was for “an organization of militants so knit together that it is capable of action on the slightest provocation, yet not straight-jacketed.” Salutsky stabs at the underground party: “Hunting in the woods and fishing around the lakes is a pursuit worthy of the gods. But the men who will forge the sledgehammer of the American revolution will come into the open from the open, not an exotic growth, and not children of a childish conspiracy.” Salutsky is bitter about the apparent subjugation of the WPA to the underground CPA: “It looks very much as if the costly experience of the last four years has been consciously cast aside, and the frail shell of the open and aboveboard movement is to be made a tail to the kite of romanticism at its worst. A perfectly irresponsible, because uncontrollable, leadership from around the corner is to keep in mechanical control of the political movement, as well as the efforts of genuine progressives in the unions. “

“Letter No. 4b to Abram Jakira and the Central Executive Committee of the CPA from Ludwig Katterfeld in Moscow, Oct. 22, 1922.” ** 2nd Edition, adds identifications, removes one footnote and adds another, alters typography. **Second of two letters from Moscow written on this date by the Communist Party of America’s representative to the Comintern, Ludwig Katterfeld, to the American party in New York. Katterfeld reveals that a provocative cable asking that the Bridgman Convention be postponed pending Cannon’s return “with full instructions” was actually a “personal message” sent by Cannon at a moment when he thought the Presidium of ECCI reconsideration of the American question was pending—Cannon clearly anticipating that the move to an open party would be accelerated by this action and seeking to head off the Goose Caucus at the pass. However, this fundamental debate being pushed by Cannon was not to be: “When the Presidium met they refused to take the question up at all until the return of the special representative [Genrik Valetski].” Cannon thus decided to remain in Moscow, Katterfeld writes. Katterfeld notes that the attitude of American-in-Moscow-without-portfolio Cannon and CPA Rep to the RILU Bureau Arne Swabeck is “extremely hostile.” Katterfeld remarks: “They seem determined to continue the factional controversy here. They say openly that they do not believe my report” of the decision to maintain the underground party made at Bridgman, and “that nothing is yet settled, that all

questions are still open for decision here, and that they will try to get the decisions of the Convention and the CEC reversed.” Katterfeld tells his factional ally Jakira, “But don’t worry. I feel sure it will come out OK.”

Letter to Art Young in New York City from Charles Garland in North Carver, MA, October 13, 1922. Very short note from the Tolstoyan and capitalist scion who converted his million dollar inheritance into a foundation called the American Fund for Public Service, an entity which provided financial support for such institutions as the American Civil Liberties Union, International Labor Defense, Vanguard Press, and various left wing organizations. Garland offers a one-sentence quote that offers food for thought and perhaps a fitting epitaph: “It often seems that what we do brings no ‘results,’ yet in a year or in a thousand years the good we do comes back to us, and brings its friends along.”

“Where Do We Stand? by C.E. Ruthenberg.” [Oct. 24, 1922] In reply to critical articles by WPA CEC members Jacob Salutsky (*The Liberator*, Oct. 1922) and Ludwig Lore (*Volkszeitung*, Oct. 15, 1922), Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg lashes out with strong criticism of the tone and ideas of each. With regard to Salutsky, Ruthenberg attacks his thesis that the labor movement had “liquidated” revolutionism in the wake of the Bridgman, Michigan, raid and arrests. To the contrary: “Labor is gaining its first stray glimpses of the fact that the enemy is not only the boss, that the struggle cannot be carried on through strikes over wages and working conditions alone—talks seriously about a strike AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT and of a labor party to put labor in control of the government. No, labor has not ‘iquidated revolution’ in the United States. If it has not yet realized the necessity of revolution it has at least begun to move in the direction that leads to revolution.” As for Lore, who argued that the Bridgman arrests and consequent necessity to spend money and effort in legal defense made it impossible for the WPA to conduct widespread political campaigns in the 1922 election, Ruthenberg responds that Bridgman was actually a “distinct advance” for the party, in that connections were formed with the progressive wing of the labor movement for the first time in the organized legal defense of the “Bridgman victims.” The cause of the WPA’s failure in the 1922 campaign was two-fold, Ruthenberg argues: a membership “incompetent” for the task of running a political campaign due to widespread lack of American citizenship, English language skills, and training in electoral politics combined with a gross failure of the WPA leadership to connect the party with the myriad of issues of daily political life—the unemployment question, soldiers’ bonuses, the new tariff, and so on. “f we wish to remedy the condition which has made us impotent this year we must face this failure of our leadership and not endeavor to hid it through such political nearsightedness as shown by Comrades Lore and Salutsky in their articles,” Ruthenberg declares.

“Force and Violence,” by Israel Amter. [Oct. 31, 1922] Amter, long a fixture on the left wing of the Communist Party of America, launches an attack on American hypocrisy as to “force and violence.” When practiced by foreign states in the service of capital, as in Italy, Hungary, South Africa, Poland, or Finland—“force and violence” is ignored or quietly applauded. When practiced by the American version of the Italian Fascisti, such as the Ku Klux Klan, sections of the American Legion, or the American Defense Society—“force and violence” is allowed to be

practiced without fetters. When practiced by state and municipal authorities—"force and violence" is allowed "without regard to law or constitution." Only in the case of workers attempting to defend their lives or jobs—or in the case of the Soviet Russian workers state defending itself against the armed assault of the world bourgeoisie—is "force and violence" condemned in the United States, Amter declares. "No doubt, in the course of time, the organized labor movement of America will be driven, in sheerest self-defense, to the adoption" of "military groups for self-defense," Amter predicts.

"Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America: New York City—Oct. 31, 1922." Minutes of the governing CEC of the Workers Party of America. The CEC steps in to mediate the bitter factional division within the WPA's Yiddish-language Section, mandating a convention of the Federation in the first week of January 1923 (immediately following the national convention of the WPA) and establishing a 10 member "Convention Committee" (5 each from the Olgin-JSF-Workers Council faction and the Bittelman-JCF-American Labor Alliance faction). This Convention Committee was to supplant the Federation's bureau, which had shifted from parity to an 11-7 division in favor of the Olgin faction and created an atmosphere in which a split seemed imminent. The CEC also endorsed the concept of formation of a Labor Party, in which the WPA was to play a part as a constituent member, and determining to seek admittance in the Conference for Progressive Political Action in advancing this cause. The CEC also discussed at length C.E. Ruthenberg's published reply to articles written by J.B. Salutsky and Ludwig Lore, endorsing Ruthenberg's position and declaring publication of Ruthenberg's article in *The Liberator* and the *Volkszeitung* effectively ended the discussion.

NOVEMBER

Resolutions and Decisions of the Second World Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions: Moscow — November 1922." Lengthy set of resolutions passed by the 2nd Congress of the Profintern. The Congress saw world trade union strength in an ebb, which was depicted as "the beginning of a well thought out, well shaped, systematic attack of capitalism upon the essentials of the workers' attainments." A regroupment of forces within the old unions was taking place, with radical forces congealing. "The trade unions must transform themselves from organs of self-defense within the capitalist system into organs for the overthrow of the capitalist rule, and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," the Congress declared. In developing towards this end, the creation of Factory Committees was held to be the most important preliminary and most important weapon of the revolutionary class struggle." The revolutionary workers were told to "strive towards the United Front and towards the unification of the workers' unions." In the United States, the resolutions of RILU advocated "close cooperation" between the Trade Union Educational League and the "independent revolutionary unions" — meaning, first and foremost the IWW. TUEL consequently "should strive to base its support upon a collective membership," including members from outside the old unions, as "it should be borne in mind that there is a great number of organized left wing workers outside the American Federation of Labor, and that the great majority of the American proletariat is outside any organization." Instead, "a position here exists of rival organizations,

which declare their affiliation to the RILU, but which do not wish to unite among themselves.” This circumstance, often arising out of some local or personal consideration, “cannot be tolerated,” the RILU resolution warned. “A Council of Action should be fashioned for coordinating the work of the minorities in the American Federation of Labor, the IWW and the Independent unions.”

Constitution of the Red International of Labor Unions, as of 2nd World

Congress—Nov. 1922.” Early constitution of RILU (also known as the Profintern), the American affiliate of which was the Trade Union Educational League. The constitution detailed the aims and purpose of the organization, which included “to organize the large working mass in the whole world for the overthrow of capitalism,” as well as carrying on “agitation and propaganda of the principles of the revolutionary class struggle, social revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and revolutionary mass action for the purpose of overthrowing the capitalist system and the bourgeois state.” The organization was to aim to unite the revolutionary workers around the world in a single coordinated organization. Membership in RILU was open to any revolutionary union endorsing the principles of revolutionary class struggle and “the necessity of the overthrow of capitalism through the social revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the transition period.” Organizations were also to recognize and submit to “international proletarian discipline,” to break with the Amsterdam International, and to “realize unity of action” with the various Communist Parties.” RILU was to be governed between Congresses by a Central Council meeting at least twice a year to decide questions of principle and a 15 member Executive Bureau to handle daily affairs. This latter body was statutorily to include 3 Russians and 1 American, along with others designated by nationality. Funding was to take place by means of sale of propaganda stamps—independent left movements to send 5% of dues collected to RILU and affiliated national federations to send 1% of dues collected. The organization published an official organ in four languages, including French, German, Russian, and English.

“Minutes of the Meeting of the Administrative Council of the Workers Party of America: New York City—Nov. 8, 1922.”

Due to the failure of the Olgin-JSF-Workers Council faction to submit to party discipline and accept the dissolution of the Jewish Federation Bureau in favor of a 10 member “Convention Committee” of factional parity. This prompted the Administrative Council (the Executive Committee of the CEC) to pass a lengthy resolution unilaterally naming this 10 member committee, setting a convention of the Jewish Federation for Jan. 1923, and setting Nov. 13, 1923, as the date for the first meeting of this Convention Committee—the meeting to be chaired by WPA Executive Secretary Ruthenberg. “The Administrative Council particularly appeals to the Jewish Branches not to permit their Federation to be disrupted by the action of one group in the Bureau, but to show their loyalty to the Party and the working class movement by carrying out the decision of the CEC. The slogan of the Jewish comrades must be ‘No Disruption—Let the convention of the Federation called by the CEC decide,’” the Administrative Council’s resolution declares.

“A Look at the Elections,” by C.E. Ruthenberg. [Nov. 1922] The Secretary of the Workers Party of America examines the significance of the recently-completed November 1922

elections. Ruthenberg sees a reversal of the 1920 landslide for Harding, a result of two years of economic depression suffered by the country: "Having found no relief in Mr. Harding's 'normalcy,' they are in turn expressing their discontent as they expressed their discontent in 1920—by voting for his opponents." Ruthenberg sees a strengthening of so-called "radical" elements within both the Republican and Democratic Parties, which he believed were merging and leading to a "new political alignment" in America in which "will bring into existence in the United States a conservative party of the capitalists; a Progressive Party representing the interests of the middle class and wealthy farmers; and a Labor Party, the mass party of the workers."

"The Workers Party and the Labor Party," by C.E. Ruthenberg. [Nov. 1922] Executive Secretary of the Workers Party of America C.E. Ruthenberg attempts to explain the relationship between the WPA and a forthcoming labor party—an institution which Ruthenberg was being inevitably brought into existence by the development of economic forces. This new party would be extremely positive, he argues, noting that if such a party was established and had "the support of millions of organized workers would be the greatest stride forward in the history of the American working class." It was the task of the Communists to "stay with the masses in their struggles," Ruthenberg indicates, and thus to participate fully in the labor party that was coming to be. There would be no liquidation of the Workers Party should any such labor party come about, however, for the educational and agitational role of the party would remain, akin to the role of the Trade Union Educational League in the unions—leading the working class and helping to transform the new party into a Communist party. Ruthenberg offers two slogans to summarize the task: "For a Labor Party!" and "For a stronger, more powerful, better disciplined Workers Party!"

"A Program of Reconstruction," by A.A. Heller [November 1, 1922] This article by the American representative of Soviet Russia's Supreme Council of National Economy (Vesenkha) in the organ of the Friends of Soviet Russia indicates that while Soviet industrial reconstruction will have to be achieved largely via Russia's own volition and internal financing, there are ways in which interested individuals can aid the process from abroad. Heller specifically mentions the work of the Society for Technical Aid to Soviet Russia (TA), an organization dedicated to equipping small parties wishing to go to Soviet Russia to establish agricultural communes or industrial cooperatives with tools, machinery, and provisions, as well as the Russian-American Industrial Corporation (RAIC), then in the process of being organized by Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. In addition, Heller cites the need for direct capital investment via a Russian-American investment bank, detailing several specific cases in which comparatively small capital investment can be employed to profitably revitalize industry—either in the form of a private concession or as a "mixed" government-private enterprise.

"Letter to the CPA Federation Director from Boodman ["R. Robins"], Secretary of the Lettish [Latvian] Federation Bureau, CPA, in Boston, Nov. 13, 1922." An interesting (albeit esoteric) document shedding some light on the aftermath of the Central Caucus faction split of 1922. Opposition to reunification is known to have been concentrated in the ultra-radical Latvian Federation. This report from (loyalist) CPA Latvian Federation Secretary Boodman

["Robins"] provides concrete numbers. There was clearly no rush to rejoin the party, with only 31 Latvian Federation members coming back to regular CPA by the June 25, 1922 date of reunification, with all but one of these hailing from the Chicago District. There was absolutely no motion from the Boston, New York, and San Francisco districts—centers of the irreconcilable Central Caucus CPA/United Toilers Party. Federation membership stood at 452 after the reunification, with the bulk of the Federation's members in three districts—Boston, New York, and Chicago. Other radical Latvian groups not connected with the CPA's Latvian Bureau existed in Philadelphia, Detroit, and elsewhere, the document indicates.

"Letter to the Bureau of the Jewish Federation, CPA from Abram Jakira, Secretary of the CPA, Nov. 13, 1922." This letter from the head of the underground CPA, Abram Jakira, emphasizes that not every individual coming from Moscow to work in the Communist Party of America bore the Comintern's cachet. "Comrade Arkadieff" (doubtlessly a pseudonym) had written to Jakira complaining that he had been excluded from sessions the Central Executive Committee of the party and shunted aside. Instead, he apparently represented himself as a Comintern plenipotentiary in charge of the Jewish Federation. Jakira makes "Arkadieff's" status clear to the Jewish Bureau under which he worked in no uncertain terms: "Com. Arkadieff declares that the Executive of the CI sent him for work in America. That is quite true. But thereupon he draws incorrect and unsupported conclusions. He believes that he is not under the discipline of the American party. That is sheerest nonsense. No one can work in the CP of A without being 100 percent under the discipline of the CEC. That a member of the CP of Russia was sent by way of the CI to work in the CP of A does not in the least denote that he is a representative of the CI, or has anything to do with the CI." Jakira seeks to put an end to the "foolish legend" that "Arkadieff" had an sort of mission to perform for the Comintern and to place him under CPA discipline. "Please inform Com. Arkadieff that he either must work under the discipline of the Party or there will be no room for him in the American Party," Jakira warns.

DECEMBER

"Memorandum to the CEC of the CPA on the Proletarian Party", by H.M. Wicks [circa Dec. 1922] This memo from former member of the Proletarian Party Harry M. Wicks notes that "since the fact that the Comintern has so far ignored [the Proletarian Party] is the only excuse they now have for remaining out of the Communist Party of this country I suggest that a communication be sent direct to [the PPA] requesting them to work in harmony with other Communist groups in the United States. Such a communication would undoubtedly force the leaders of that party to act or would alienate their membership from them, with the result that all the better elements of the Proletarian Party would join the recognized party of the Comintern [the CPA] and proceed to work under the discipline of that party." This idea was met with the Dec. 22, 1922, letter from CPA Executive Secretary Abram Jakira to the Comintern requesting the same and providing an outline of the Proletarian Party's history and suggested content for the communication—which was issued on Feb. 19, 1923 by ECCI Secretary General Otto Kuusinen. This memorandum by Wicks is an excellent summary of the early history of the Michigan tendency in the Socialist Party of America and its emergence as the Proletarian Party of America, describing the events of 1919 through the eyes of an adherent of the Michigan group. Wicks states that he had been a follower of the Michigan tendency since 1916, that is, prior to his moving to Portland, Oregon and activity in the Socialist Party of Oregon. This

explains much of Wicks' seemingly unstable political activity in the 1920-22 period—behavior that has been attributed by some to external direction, with Wicks in the role of police spy. Instead, a certain coherence and logic to Wicks' actions reveals itself. Wicks freely admits that he broke the discipline of the Michigan faction in 1919 when he accepted a position on the CEC and Executive Council of the new Communist Party of America, but provides an explanation for his behavior (that he was “hoping to be able to propagate the Michigan tendency in order to test the Party position at the next convention.”) His subsequent action was wholly in accord with the PPA's general political line up to his break with that organization in the fall of 1922, it now seems. Includes copious footnotes and a short biography of Harry Wicks.

“Comments Regarding the Wicks Memorandum on the Proletarian Party of America,”

by C.E. Ruthenberg. [circa December 1922] C.E. Ruthenberg's critical comments on various aspects of Harry Wicks' December 1922 memo outlining Proletarian Party of America history and recommending that the Comintern issue a communication instructing the PPA to liquidate itself and for its members to join the CPA/WPA. Ruthenberg accuses Wicks of painting too rosy a picture of the Michigan group's ideology, noting that Batt's alternative program had been “laughed out of court” by the June 1919 Conference of the Left Wing Section; that the group had held a sectarian anti-union position and had rejected the entire notion of mass action; that Wicks had misrepresented the nature of the St. Louis Manifesto of 1917 and the Socialist Party of Michigan's response to it; that the CPA's ideology had been misunderstood and mischaracterized as “Blanquism;” that the PPA's organizational strength had been exaggerated by a factor of 2; and that the details of the Michigan group's exclusion from the CPA were presented inaccurately. Rather than being expelled in November 1919 as Wicks contended, Ruthenberg asserts that “The Proletarian group was still part of the Communist Party in January 1920 after the raids. I personally went to Detroit to reorganize the CP and conferred with [Al] Renner, [A.J.] MacGregor, and [John] Keracher. They refused to become part of an underground party. They were dropped out of the CP in February of 1920 because they refused to have any part in the reorganization.”

Proposed Statement of Principles of the Conference for Progressive Political Action.

[Prepared by the Workers Party of America for the 2nd Conference, Dec. 11-12, 1922] The Workers Party of America made a concerted effort to gain admission as an affiliated political organization to the 2nd Conference for Progressive Political Action, held in Cleveland on Dec. 11-12, 1922. A four member delegation, including Bill Dunne, Caleb Harrison, Ludwig Lore, and C.E. Ruthenberg was sent to the meeting, along with Harry Gannes of the Young Workers League. The WPA and its youth section were refused participation in the conference by the Credentials Committee, however, the views of the Communist movement on revolution held as anathema to the organization. This is an indication of what the WPA sought to achieve through the CPPA — a proposed program for the organization. The most notable difference between this program and the 1922 Congressional Election Program used earlier that fall was a call for a very extensive amount of nationalization, including “the immediate nationalization of the railroads, the coal mines, the steel mills, the oil industry, the merchant marine, and other large-scale industries in which ownership has become highly centralized.” In addition, immediate nationalization was urged for “all storage, transportation, and marketing utilities and the revision of the banking laws so as to provide for the widest credit to the farmers through government loans without interest.” These nationalizations were to be achieved “through

application of the Plumb Plan, modified to give the organized workers in these industries a majority control of the industry and with provisions for taxation of the capitalist owners in such a degree as to quickly wipe out their title to these industries.” Also of note in this document are repeated uses of the phrase “wage-workers and farmers” as the exploited group to whom appeal is made. The document has harsh words for “American Democracy,” noting the structural checks and balances of the American constitutional system and asserting “to talk of ‘democracy’ is to throw sand in the eyes of the workers. The much talked of ‘American Democracy’ is a fraud. Such formal democracy as is written into the Constitution and the laws of the country is camouflage to hide the real character of the rule of the capitalists.

“The Skirmish in Cleveland,” by C.E. Ruthenberg [events of Dec. 11-12, 1922] This assessment of the founding conclave of the Conference for Progressive Political Action by Workers Party of America Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg first appeared in the pages of *The Liberator*. Ruthenberg declares that “with the help of Yellow Socialists “progressivism” carried the day but the conditions surrounding its victory spell its ultimate defeat and the victory of labor.” Ruthenberg sees three factions within the CPPA alliance: a Right wing consisting of the Railroad brotherhoods, acting in concert with the Socialist Party who “do not want a labor party”; a Center group including the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, United Mine Workers, and other labor and farmer groups who sought a labor party but were unwilling to fight for it; and a Left wing including the WPA and its allies “who had come to the Conference prepared to fight over every inch of ground for the establishment of a labor party.” A proposal for the formation of a Labor Party was defeated 52 to 64, Ruthenberg indicates, which shows “that if a determined fight had been made from the beginning, the labor party proposal would have been carried.” Even though barred from the gathering, Ruthenberg proclaims it a “victory” for the organization, since “the question of the Workers Party and its determined stand for a class party of workers and farmers dominated the Conference.”

“A Splendid Opportunity,” by Robert Minor [December 1922] Leading member of the Workers Party of America Robert Minor introduces the readers of the *Friends of Soviet Russia*’s official organ to the new Russian-American Industrial Corporation (RAIC), established by Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. Minor takes special care to diffuse the criticism leveled against the new corporation in the pages of the *New York Tribune* by former financial advisor William O. Thompson, who was sharply critical of Hillman for failing to engage in the lucrative export trade but instead concentrating on the more difficult and less profitable establishment of clothing manufacturing capacity in conjunction with various Soviet clothing trusts. Minor notes that Hillman had negotiated a state guarantee of both the principal invested by the RAIC as well as a guaranteed 8 percent return on that money. Thompson’s failure to get behind this splendid opportunity meant little more than he had “lost his nerve” and “fallen for the old emigr ’s theory” that Soviet Russia would collapse imminently and thus was incapable of guaranteeing an investment or the return on that investment. Minor states that “the one remaining obstacle to its existence is the boycott of capitalists who will not supply it with industrial machinery. The Soviet Government appeals over the heads of the capitalists, asking the workers of the world to break the boycott by supplying industrial machinery as friend to friend in partnership.”

“Administrative Council Outlines Negotiations with Jewish Bureau, States Present Position: Letter of C.E. Ruthenberg to Louis F. Wolf, Dec. 1, 1922.” [Published Dec. 16, 1922] An extremely valuable primary source document, a letter by WPA Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg to Louis Wolf, Executive Secretary of the WPA’s German section, recounting the crisis in the Jewish section of the WPA in close detail. A day-by-day review of the meetings of November 17-23, 1922, held between Ruthenberg (representing the Administrative Council of the WPA) and various representatives of the Jewish Bureau is provided, including the specific demands of the CEC—50 percent ownership of the Olgin-edited *Freiheit*, a specific system for election of delegates to the Dec. 16 national conference of the Jewish section, and reestablishment of a 50-50 division of the Jewish Bureau between the Olgin and Bittelman factions. Ruthenberg interestingly notes that the split of the Bureau was negotiated away by the Administrative Council, but the Jewish Bureau insisted on additional concessions, which eliminated the Administrative Council’s concession as the two sides moved to impasse.

“Cable to the Workers Party of America in New York from Grigorii Zinoviev in Moscow, December 1922.” In 1922 the Jewish Federation of the Workers Party of America was racked by an internal split, pitting the historic leadership of the Jewish Federation dating back to Socialist Party days, headed by Alexander Bittelman against the Jewish component of the Workers’ Council group, headed by Moissaye Olgin. The Federation Executive Committee was initially divided down the middle between these two factions, but over the course of 1922, several members of the Federation Executive Committee began to vote with the Olgin faction, resulting in a working majority for the militantly anti-underground Olgin group. Although the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party insisted upon parity on the Federation Executive Committee prior to the WPA Jewish Federation’s 2nd Convention, the Olgin group sought to consolidate its position by calling a convention of the Jewish Federation for the first half of December, prior to the 2nd Convention of the WPA—intent on presenting the national organization with a *fait accompli*. This is a cable from Moscow signed by Zinoviev condemning the antics of the Olgin group as a “frivolous breach of discipline” against the Administrative Council of the Workers Party “perpetrated by [a] group which did not even attempt inform its representatives in Moscow” about the object of their conflict and “did not await decision of court of last resort as was their right as well as their duty.” Using this cable as additional ammunition, an agreement was brokered between the two factions of the Jewish organization prior to the scheduled Dec. 16, 1922, start of the wildcat convention.

“Comrades of the Jewish Federation! Stand by the Party! Statement by the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party, Published Dec. 9, 1922.” In 1922 the Jewish Federation of the Workers Party of America was racked by an internal split, pitting the historic leadership of the Jewish Federation dating back to Socialist Party days, headed by Alexander Bittelman against the Jewish component of the Workers’ Council group, headed by Moissaye Olgin. The Federation Executive Committee was initially divided down the middle between these two factions, but over the course of 1922, several members of the Federation Executive Committee began to vote with the Olgin faction, resulting in a working majority for the militantly anti-underground Olgin group. Although the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party insisted upon parity on the Federation Executive Committee prior to the WPA Jewish Federation’s 2nd Convention, the Olgin group sought to consolidate its position by calling a convention of the Jewish Federation for the first half of December, prior to the 2nd Convention

of the WPA—intent on presenting the national organization with a *fait accompli*. This was regarded as a severe breach of party discipline, bringing this fierce rebuke of the Olgin faction as non-Communist “centrists” intent upon splitting the Jewish Federation.

“Report on the 4th Comintern Congress to the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America,” by Max Bedacht [circa December 1922]. A very informative summary of the activities of the 4th World Congress of the Communist International (Nov. 5-Dec. 5, 1922) as they related to the Communist Party of America, written by WPA delegate Max Bedacht for the Central Executive Committee of his party. Bedacht mentions two pivotal changes in the evolutionary history of the Comintern: (1) a structural change in which the 25 members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International are no longer to be elected representatives of the various member parties (responsible to those parties) but rather are to be elected by the CI Congress itself for the task of advancing its decisions (responsible to the next CI Congress); and (2) the establish of a precedent in which the French Commission reorganized the Executive Committee of the French Party and instructed all factions to submit to this reorganized committee. “Thus the CI established its right to oust elected officials of any of its sections and to replace them with its own appointees,” Bedacht notes. The merger of the underground CPA and the open Workers Party of America was mandated by the American Commission of the 4th Congress, which called for the amalgamation of the Executives of these two organizations into a single Executive Committee which was to direct both legal and illegal activities of the unified organization. The Workers Party of America was thus to be the official section of the Comintern in America, its members subject to CI discipline, Bedacht notes, although “for legalistic purposes...such affiliation will be acknowledged by the Comintern only as one of a sympathetic party. But the delegates of the WP will enjoy all the rights and privileges of delegates of other sections of the CI.”

Letter to the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow from Abraham Jakira in New York. [December 1922] Yet another document illustrating the inadequacy of “Traditionalist” depiction of the relationship between the Comintern and the American Communist movement during the first half of the 1920s. Instead of a rigid paramilitary command structure in which “orders” flowed down from a handful of arbitrary dictators in Russia and were dutifully “accepted” by American radicals, we see the reality here of a circularity of information and instructions. Executive Secretary of the underground CPA A. Jakira writes on behalf of the underground CEC to Moscow instructing the Comintern to send a letter to the forthcoming 2nd Convention of the Workers Party of America. A very specific rebuke of the so-called “Centrists” in the WPA is detailed at very great length in this document, and ECCI is “begged” to “1. Telegraph us at once whether you have received this letter. 2. Act at once and write the letter immediately. 3. Send the main contents of the letter by cable to the office of the Workers Party, for we fear that your letter will arrive late. The convention is on December 25.” The Comintern was emphatically not perceived or utilized in this case as an omniscient oracle on high but rather as a sort of intellectual cudgel—an external authority to which appeal could be made to adjudicate upon domestic factional controversy and a tool for imposing Party unity upon Party members holding minority viewpoint following decision. The tendency of many so-called “Traditionalist” scholars to anachronistically project later and

changed power relations between Moscow and New York into the early 1920s milieu is a serious and recurring error in the literature, one that careful study of this and similar documents might help to eliminate.

“Workers! Organize the Party of Labor! Manifesto of the Workers Party of America, Published December 9, 1922.” In the aftermath of the 1922 election and prior to the first national meeting of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, the Workers Party of America attempted to exert its influence to bring about the creation of an American Labor Party on the British model. This manifesto to the American working class declares: “You can compel the Conference for Progressive Political Action to act. Hold mass meetings for the labor party. Adopt resolutions in your union. Demand the Labor Party to be organized by the labor unions and to include all the existing labor political organizations. The Workers Party has declared its readiness to become a part of the Labor Party as an autonomous body. It is ready to cooperate with the organized workers to create a mass political organization to fight the battles of labor.”

“All Eyes on Cleveland! Workers! Watch for Treason at Political Conference!” [Dec. 1922]A last minute appeal by the Workers Party of America for its members and supporters to bombard the forthcoming Second Conference of the Conference for Progressive Political Action (held Dec. 11-12, 1922) with demands for an immediate formation of an “independent party of labor opposing all capitalist parties.” According to the appeal—which was published under a banner headline on the front page of the weekly edition of *The Worker*—immediate action was necessary as “all indications show that an effort at betrayal of labor’s interests is afoot. An attempt will be made to deliver the Conference into the hands of Sam Gompers and his reactionary ‘reward and punish’ political policy.”

“First Day’s Proceedings of the Cleveland Conference of the CPPA, December 11, 1922.” ** 2nd Edition, alters typography. ** Unsigned journalism from the pages of *The Worker* recounting the activities of the first day’s sessions of the 2nd gathering of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, held in Cleveland. Of major importance was the decision of the Conference to deny seats to the delegates of the Workers Party of America and the Young Workers League. The reporter notes the machinations of the credentials committee of the conference as well as the high-handed efforts by officers of the CPPA to bar the Communists from participation. Particularly stern words are reserved for the Socialists, who were believed to have established a working agreement with the right wing of the conference in opposing immediate formation of an independent Labor Party. This position is contrasted with that of the delegates Farmer-Labor Party, who indicated that they would use all of their influence to immediately bring about the formation of such a party. The poor attendance of the Social Party’s Cleveland “mass meeting” held in conjunction with the conference is ridiculed as further evidence of the “discredited and decrepit” nature of the SPA.

“All Party Federations Condemn Breach of Discipline by Jewish Federation Bureau.” [Published Dec. 16, 1922] In December 1922 a full-scale factional war erupted in the Jewish

Language Section of the Workers Party of America, pitting the Workers' Council group, led by Moissaye J. Olgin, against the Jewish Federation of the unified CPA, headed by Alexander Bittelman. The Olgin group sought to consolidate its position by rushing a convention in December 1922, to be held before the 2nd National Convention of the WPA rather than after, and in this manner to present the national organization with a fait accompli. This decision came in opposition to the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the WPA. This is the text of a resolution signed by representatives of all the WPA's other Language Sections condemning the position of the Olgin group-dominated Jewish Federation Bureau and endorsing the position of the CEC, which called for a Jewish Bureau evenly divided between the Workers' Council-Olgin and Jewish Communist Federation-Bittelman factions.

“Report on the Labor Union Situation in the United States and Canada, Dec. 16, 1922,” by William Z. Foster. A confidential report from the Comintern Archive, likely intended to Grigori Zinoviev and other decision-makers in the Comintern apparatus. Foster describes the efforts of the Trade Union Educational League in rather heroic terms, stating that with a paid staff of 2 and virtually no funding it had “started” the amalgamation movement, which was “now the sensation of the American trade unions” and “running like wildfire.” As unions melted away under the fire of the capitalist offensive, rank and file revolt against “Gompersism” was brewing. Foster requests an annual appropriation of \$25,000 to fund four full-time field organizers for TUEL and upgrade the official organ of the organization, *The Labor Herald*.

“Letter to the Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow from Abram Jakira in New York.” [received Dec. 14, 1922] ** Second Edition: Adds photo of Jakira, alters typography, refines date of receipt. ** Yet another document illustrating the inadequacy of “Traditionalist” depiction of the relationship between the Comintern and the American Communist movement during the first half of the 1920s. Instead of a rigid paramilitary command structure in which “orders” flowed down from a handful of arbitrary dictators in Russia and were dutifully “accepted” by American radicals, we see the reality here of a circularity of information and instructions. Executive Secretary of the underground CPA A. Jakira writes on behalf of the underground CEC to Moscow instructing the Comintern to send a letter to the forthcoming 2nd Convention of the Workers Party of America. A very specific rebuke of the so-called “Centrists” in the WPA is detailed at very great length in this document, and ECCI is “begged” to “1. Telegraph us at once whether you have received this letter. 2. Act at once and write the letter immediately. 3. Send the main contents of the letter by cable to the office of the Workers Party, for we fear that your letter will arrive late. The convention is on December 25.” The Comintern was emphatically not perceived or utilized in this case as an omniscient oracle on high but rather as a sort of intellectual cudgel— an external authority to which appeal could be made to adjudicate upon domestic factional controversy and a tool for imposing Party unity upon Party members holding minority viewpoint following decision. The tendency of many so-called “Traditionalist” scholars to anachronistically project later and changed power relations between Moscow and New York into the early 1920s milieu is a serious and recurring error in the literature, one that careful study of this and similar documents might help to eliminate.

“Circular Letter #20 to All CPA District Organizers from Abram Jakira, Executive Secretary.” [Dec. 20, 1922]

This weekly circular to DOs by Executive Secretary of the underground CPA Abram Jakira notes that the CEC is analyzing the Labor Party question in the aftermath of the recently concluded Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political Action, from which the Communists were excluded. Jakira also updates the DOs on the status of the factional war raging in the Jewish Federation between underground partisans (Bittelman group) and advocates of an exclusively open party (Olgin group). A series of meetings had been held with the Jewish Federation, the snap Dec. 16-17, 1922 convention of the federation called by the open party “Centrists” had been recognized, and a new Jewish Federation Bureau elected. “You are requested to see to it that our comrades [JCF-Bittelman faction] stop their fight with the non-party members of the Jewish branches and work hand in hand with the Jewish Federation of the party [CPA] and the LPP [WPA] and jointly help build up the LPP [WPA],” Jakira states. While these matters may seem esoteric or mundane, one important corollary fact emerges—even at this late date in December 1922, well after the Dec. 5 conclusion of the 4th World Congress of the Communist International, the underground CPA continued to function as normal. Its demise was not yet, it would seem, nor as a result of direct Comintern decision at the 4th World Congress.

“Salutsky—A Communist?” by C.E. Ruthenberg. [Dec. 23, 1922] The Workers Party of America actively sought to participate in the Second Conference of the CPPA, going so far as to send delegates to Cleveland. The credentials of the WPA were initially “lost” by the credentials committee, but the matter was referred back to the committee from the floor of the convention. The second time around, the credentials committee recommended that the Workers Party not be seated because “the principles of this organization are not in harmony with those of this conference.” This was instantly ruled as adopted “unanimously” by the chair, a decision which was protested from the floor by delegate Robert D. Cramer of the Minneapolis Trade and Labor Assembly (not a member of the WPA). Cramer’s appeal of the decision of the chair died for the lack of a second, however, despite the presence on the floor of delegate Jacob Salutsky of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the WPA. This resulted in this harsh denunciation of Salutsky for failing to come to the aid of his party by Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg, an article published in the weekly English-language newspaper of the WPA.

“Membership Series by Language Federation for the Workers Party of America. ‘Dues Actually Paid’—(March to June) vs. (July to Oct.) 1922 and 8 Month Average.”

Tim Davenport, ed. [from report of Dec. 24, 1922] This document summarizes federation-by-federation membership data presented to the 2nd National Convention of the Workers Party of America, based upon dues statistics generated through the month of October 1922. The statistics show that nearly half of the WPA in its first year were members of the organization’s Finnish Federation. English was the 2nd largest of the 14 language sections (1 out of 8 WPA members hailing from English language locals), while the Yiddish language locals included 1 member out of 10.

“Membership Series by District for the Workers Party of America. ‘Dues Actually

Paid'—(March to June) vs. (July to Oct.) 1922 and 8 Month Average," Tim Davenport, ed. [from report of Dec. 24, 1922] This document summarizes district-by-district membership data presented to the 2nd National Convention of the Workers Party of America, based upon dues statistics generated through the month of October 1922. Executive Secretary C.E. Ruthenberg does not provide a month-by-month membership series, but rather splits 8 months of statistics into two periods, which are compared in tabular form here. The New York district was responsible for over 26% of the dues actually paid to the Workers Party in the period through October 1922, with Boston the 2nd largest district, followed by Minneapolis (a by-product of the WPA's Finnish orientation), and Chicago the 4th. Ruthenberg notes that in Nov. 1922 "the reports are not yet complete but the dues payments received (with the Federations and district not reported estimated) show 16,500 dues stamps sold. It is a safe estimate that with all the new members added to the Party through the Czecho-Slovak Federation, the Scandinavian Federation, and the United Toilers that the dues payments for December [1922] and January [1923] will reach a total of 20,000."

Letter to the Executive Committee of the Communist International Regarding the Proletarian Party of America from Abram Jakira, Executive Secretary of the Communist Party of America, Dec. 12, 1922. This letter from the head of the underground Communist Party of America to ECCI illustrates the way in which the center-periphery relationship between the early Comintern and its member national Communist Parties was not a one-way street with Moscow arbitrarily "commanding" and the national parties silently and compliantly "obeying." In this case, the CPA requests of Moscow that a political letter be written by the Comintern to the Proletarian Party of America, instructing PPA members who wish to participate in the international communist movement to immediately join the Communist Party of American and Workers Party of America. An outline history of the Proletarian Party and its split from the CPA is provided to the ECCI as background information for the writing of the letter. An extensive set of points for inclusion in the letter is also provided, including a statement that the Comintern should tell the PPA that it considers the members of the Proletarian Party "to be good Communists," that the decision to exclude the PPA from the preparations of the Workers Party of America be admitted as a "tactical mistake," that the PPA's educational work "must be applied to organizing large masses of workers under the banner of a revolutionary party," and so on. Jakira states to ECCI that the CPA seeks the infusion of the small Proletarian Party due to the fact that "they are mostly English-speaking, good speakers, several good writers and active union men. There is such a scarcity of such material in our own ranks that the addition of the several hundred members in their ranks will be of tremendous importance for our immediate activities." Jakira's request for a Comintern letter to the PPA was met by ECCI Secretary-General Otto Kuusinen on April 7, 1923, when he wrote an open letter to the members and CEC of the Proletarian Party (also available as a downloadable file).

"Constitution of the Workers Party of America. As Amended by the Second National Convention, New York City, December 24-25 and 26, 1922." The 2nd Convention of the Workers Party of America approved a small set of revisions to the constitution of the organization. Chief of these is an expansion of the size of the Central Executive Committee from 17 to 25 members and the introduction of a new top-level body, an 11 member "Executive Council" elected by the CEC. The revised constitution also includes a new Article XIV detailing relations between the WPA and the Young Workers League, featuring exchange of fully

empowered delegates from one organization to the meetings of the other from the top level Executive Committees, to the governing Federation authorities, to Convention delegates, to standing committees of the central organizations.

“Report to the Executive Committee of the Communist International on the Labor Party Campaign,” by Abram Jakira [Dec. 27, 1922] The second half of December 1922 was a period of introspection and theoretical planning for the underground Communist Party of America. It had been rebuffed at the Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political Action held earlier in the month, yet labor party sentiment among the working class was widespread and seemed to be increasing. The legal political party, the Workers Party of America seemed to be thriving and growing, now officially affiliated with the Communist International as a sympathizing party and operating effectively in the world with few ideological punches pulled. This document by Executive Secretary Jakira details for the Comintern the activity of the underground CPA in the labor party campaign in America and the events relating to the CPPA. The Cleveland Conference and its failure to immediately launch a labor party had exposed the Socialist Party as the tail of the cautious trade union officialdom and advanced the Workers Party of America as “one of the most important factors in the political life of the wage earners and farmers, and as the only political group that unequivocally and decisively expresses their interests.” “A renewed and more intense campaign for the LP is to be made by the [underground CPA],” Jakira declares.

“Instructions to CEC Members [re: mass membership meetings of the Workers Party of America]” (*Daily Worker*) [Dec. 27, 1924] Brief notice in *The Daily Worker* adding further procedural details for the conduct of the forthcoming 10 open “membership meetings” to debate the competing theses of the Foster-Cannon majority and Pepper-Ruthenberg minority groups on the labor-party question. Very heated gatherings were clearly anticipated, as rules 1 and 2 demonstrate: “(1) The representatives of the CEC (majority) shall exercise active control over the mass membership meetings and enforce the decisions of the CEC regarding the same. They shall be held strictly responsible for the preservation of order and the taking of a fair vote. (2) Should any organized resistance develop against the putting into effect of these decisions, the CEC members shall if necessary call upon the minority representatives to speak, together with such other comrades as may be necessary to preserve party discipline.”

“New York Experiences,” by Charles Krumbein [Dec. 29, 1924] This article published in *The Daily Worker* by New York District Organizer and Bill Foster partisan Charles Krumbein attempts to demonstrate the ineffectual nature of the farmer-labor party tactic and the improvements in efficacy generate by the Workers Party running candidates in its own name. The New York local of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party had run 6 candidates for State Assembly and 4 candidates for city aldermen in the fall of 1923, generating \$842 in donations and spending \$1500 on the campaign—the Workers Party of America absorbing the deficit. By way of contrast, Krumbein notes that the WPA had first successfully navigated the petitioning process to gain access to the ballot, had raised \$16,000 for the campaign, and had in the course of the campaign distributed “nearly 1 million pieces of literature.” In the single month of October 1924, the WPA had taken in 180 new party members—60 more than the average for

the previous 10 months. Mass meetings held during the campaign drew as many as 6,000, and vote totals generated for WPA candidates exceeded the totals for FFLP candidates in the previous campaign. Krumbein neglects to factor into his analysis the detail that the fall of 1924 was a general election and the fall of 1923 was a by-election. Krumbein enthusiastically declares: "We reached the masses as never before and I am sure better than we ever could through a FLP. Many members stated they were glad they could make the fight out and out as against a camouflage, as our FLP was known and called by all our enemies.... Whoever says we can't go to the masses in our own name, but must use a "false face" in face of above facts has another guess coming."

"As to the 'Marxian Trunk' of the Party," by William Z. Foster [Dec. 30, 1924] CEC majority faction leader Bill Foster weighs in on the debate over the farmer-labor party tactic which dominated the party press at the end of 1924. Foster notes feeling a "gentle pain" (presumably in his lower regions) over the "high and lofty air of intellectual superiority assumed by the leading comrades of the minority." This Foster attributes to a stylistic holdover from the reign of John Pepper, when it was "quite the mode for the 'intellectuals' of the minority to ridicule with disdain the efforts of the merely proletarian members of the CEC." Foster calls this an "anti-Communist attitude" and asserts that adherents of such a view are nauseating braggarts, whose pretense to Marxian primacy is belied by their befuddled support of the opportunistic farmer-labor party tactic. Foster uses examples of Comintern support of his faction's line as positive proof of his group's Marxist credentials: "We all know that the CI is a real international and that it does not hesitate to reorganize a Central Executive Committee in any country if such action is necessary in order to put the party involved back into Bolshevik control. Now if the claims of the minority were true the duty of the Comintern would have been clear, and we know it would have performed that duty relentlessly by removing the present CEC from power. But the Comintern refused to do this. Somehow it failed to get the point that the minority were the only Communist, Marxian branch in our party. Possibly it may have thought there were just as good Communists and Marxists among the majority. But at any rate, and this is the big thing, the Comintern rejected the demands of Pepper..." The minority had subsequently learned that "the proletarians of the majority can at the very least hold their own with the "intellectuals" of the minority, and can puncture their opportunism quite effectively," Foster triumphantly declares.

"Ruthenberg's 'Farmer-Labor Audit,'" by Joseph Manley [Dec. 30, 1924] Former head of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party Joseph Manley—a former adherent of the Pepper-Ruthenberg faction despite being the son-in-law of William Z. Foster—fires back at the Executive Secretary of the WPA in this *Daily Worker* article. Ruthenberg's financial summary of the costs of the Farmer-Labor Party campaign is portrayed as a conscious underestimate in an effort to discredit Manley. "It may come as a shock and a surprise to our membership to find Comrade Ruthenberg using his high office to misrepresent facts and figures with the end in view of destroying a political adversary," Manley declares. After detailing several examples of underestimated costs in the Ruthenberg "audit," Manley asserts: "All this is done with a purpose, first, to make me appear a damnfool—though when I was a member of the Pepper faction he thought me sensible enough to nominated me twice to be the secretary of two of his pet Farmer-Labor Parties—and, second, to minimize the expense to the Workers Party of that which he was such a devout champion - the Farmer-Labor Party." Manley stands by his

previous estimate of \$50,000 spent by the Communist movement the Farmer-Labor Party campaign, as opposed to \$19,500 asserted by Ruthenberg's report. "The dead hand of the Farmer-Labor Party has lost its grip. Down with the corpse!" Manley asserts.

"Political Romancing Must Give Way to Realism," by Alfred Wagenknecht [Dec. 24, 1924]

At the end of 1924 and into the first month of 1925 there was an open discussion in the party press on the strategy and tactics of the Workers Party of America—a period of frank debate that quickly degenerated into finger-pointing and personal denigration that emphasized the bitterly fractured state of the organization. In this article, former head of the Communist Labor Party and United Communist Party Alfred Wagenknecht takes aim at factional leader John Pepper for replacing the period of underground romanticism with a period of opportunistic legal party romanticism. The nature and revolutionary potential of the political movement of the bankrupted farmers has been greatly overestimated by Pepper, Wagenknecht indicates. Pepper's so-called "big success" in establishing what was purported to be a Federated Farmer-Labor Party including over 600,000 rank and file unionists and farmers was revealed to be a chimera, as "the minute we lost a few high officials, the Fitzpatrick group in Chicago, and a few other high officials in various other "strongholds of the labor party idea," the FFLP wrinkled up and died," Wagenknecht states. Wagenknecht asks: "What was our error? We were crazy for a Farmer-Labor Party. We saw immense masses where in reality only single crooked leaders stood. The capitalist crisis was not severe enough to move the workers and farmers towards independent political action." Wagenknecht credits the Comintern's intervention with short-circuiting the opportunistic drive of some in the Workers Party for alliance with the LaFollette movement. Wagenknecht states the moment has passed for the formation of a mass farmer-labor party, and that any attempt by the WPA to forge one out of thin air with the aid of its "near relatives" would "mean nothing but a third debacle and a further loss of the confidence of workers' organizations." Wagenknecht declares that "We must at least realize that the masses of workers are not as politically advanced as we thought they were.... The tempo, the decline of American capitalism is not at all abreast of Pepper's imagination."

"What the Communist International Thinks of the Different Groups in the Party," by Jay Lovestone [Dec. 26, 1924]

Jay Lovestone has long had the reputation of having been a particularly unprincipled and vicious faction fighter on behalf of the Pepper-Lovestone "minority" faction of the Workers Party of America. This article from the Dec. 1924-Jan. 1925 "discussion" of tactics gives currency to that allegation. The Pepper-Ruthenberg faction is characterized as the "Marxian" section of the Workers Party; the Foster-Cannon faction as "superficial, empiric, non-Marxian" group dominated by a primitive trade union consciousness and the Lore group as a "Left Social Democratic group" on the "extreme Right of our party." Lovestone seasons his charges with liberal quotations from Comintern leader Karl Radek and additionally attempts to validate his perspective of the Fosterites by quoting chapter and verse from Iosif Stalin's Foundations of Leninism. Lovestone spends the most ammunition on Ludwig Lore in a clear effort to split the governing Foster-Cannon-Lore-Finnish Federation majority of the CEC. Foster's alliance with Lore is characterized as an "inestimable danger" to the party and a flagrant violation of Comintern wishes to remove Lore from a place in party governance. Lovestone's critique of the Foster group is ironic in retrospect in view of Lovestone's future development as the leading exponent of so-called "American exceptionalism." Lovestone charges that Foster & Co. followed bourgeois economists in seeing an economic boom of American capitalism following the election of Calvin Coolidge and seeking to delay until a more timely moment a political offensive against capitalism. Lovestone charges that for Foster and

his co-thinkers “industrial activity and mobilization for the same were an end in itself.” To this he contrasts the well-rounded and balanced perspective of the “Marxian” faction headed by Comrade Pepper.

“My Position Toward the Farmer-Labor Movement,” by Ludwig Lore [Dec. 29, 1924] Odd man out in the inner party war of 1924-25 was Ludwig Lore, editor of the New Yorker Volkszeitung and leader of a New York-based section of the party in opposition to the New York-based Pepper-Ruthenberg-Lovestone group. CEC member and Foster ally Lore was allowed unfettered access to the party press, however, and thus was able to chronicle his actual opinions on party tactics—as opposed to the purported views condemned by his opponents or damned by the faint praise of the Chicago-based Foster-Cannon faction. Lore indicates his alliance with the Foster group is ideological rather than driven by motives of power-politics: “Taken as a whole, I agree with the majority thesis. The farmer-labor movement is dead and is not likely to awaken to a new existence for years to come,” Lore says, despite his belief that such a tactic was previously possible and in accord with the WPA’s “fundamental Communist conception.” Lore indicates that the Farmer-Labor Party line pursued most aggressively by the Pepper minority faction was based upon “a policy of self-deception” in which the WPA projected itself and its close allies of reflective of the interests of the broad working class in the aftermath of a split of the farmer-labor movement in which the farmers bolted the Federated FLP for the insurgent 3rd party candidacy of Robert LaFollette. Lore provides a historically valuable narrative of the events behind the seminal decision in July 1923 to immediately move to the formation of a Federated Farmer-Labor Party, despite the protestations of Fitzpatrick, Nockels, and Buck, the leadership of the Farmer-Labor Party of the US. Lore testifies that he had attempted to avert this grave misstep—a decision which “placed us in so disadvantageous a position and that prompted the [Foster group] to abandon the Federated Farmer-Labor Party almost at birth, because it feared the active opposition of the trade union movement...” Lore further charges that the Pepper minority faction, for all their posturing about the need for mass action, effectively scuttled the Farmer-Labor Party project by failing to send out organizers to union locals at the appropriate juncture to build the organization. “It would have been possible at that time, in my opinion, to build up, not a gigantic movement, it is true, but a movement that would have enabled us to galvanize large sections of organized labor into political class action, to establish for the revolutionary working class a sphere of influence that would have given it a broad field for active work,” Lore declares.

“Labor Party Must Be Formed: Manifesto on the Cleveland Conference by the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party.” [Published Dec. 30, 1922] The failure of the Workers Party of America to have its delegates seated at the Cleveland assembly of the Conference for Progressive Political Action was a disappointment; the conference’s failure to immediately move forward to the establishment of an American Labor Party on the British model was a “betrayal.” This manifesto was issued by the governing CEC of the Workers Party in the aftermath of the Cleveland Conference—and it marked a shift in WPA thinking about the CPPA. As the Farmer-Labor Party left the CPPA, so, too, did the Workers Party stop seeing that group as an organizing committee for the new political party. The CPPA was dominated by a bloc of “reactionary trade union officials aided by the Socialist Party,” this manifesto charged, who had sabotaged the grassroots desire of industrial workers and farmers for independent political action in favor of the Gompersesque tactic of “rewarding friends and punishing

enemies” in the Republican and Democratic parties. “The Workers Party will continue to give all its strength and militant leadership to the fight for the labor party,” the manifesto declared, calling on farmers’ and workers’ organizations to continue to exert pressure for the establishment of this institution.

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“Jewish Federation United: Statement to the Party by the Administrative Council.”

[Published Dec. 30, 1922] Facing the possibility of a split of the Workers Party’s Jewish Federation, emergency negotiations were conducted between the Bureau of the Federation and the Administrative Council of the WPA, resulting in the agreement summarized here. The forthcoming Dec. 16, 1922, Convention of the Jewish Federation was recognized as official, the membership of the new Federation Bureau was to be evenly split between the historic Jewish Socialist Federation faction (Bittelman group) and the historic Workers’ Council faction (Olgin group) with an additional member to be named by the CEC of the WPA, ownership of the official organ of the Jewish Federation was to be transferred to the CEC of the WPA as soon as one other daily and weekly were transferred by other WPA Federations, and the new Bureau was to agree to submit to the discipline of the CEC of the WPA, with only violation of party principles and discipline to be grounds for removal from that body.

“Party Statement: Issued by the Central Executive Committee as a Result of the First Party Council Assembled in December.” [circa Dec. 31, 1922]

It was not the fiat of the Comintern which liquidated the underground CPA, but rather the logic of the internal development of parallel organizations—the WPA growing in size and influence, the CPA atrophying, with a tight budget and the political needs of the day forcing the issue. But if not a Comintern ukaze (as the Cannonite-Draperian school would have it), what was the event that triggered the demise of the parallel underground CPA apparatus? This document perhaps offers a clue: criticism launched at the December meeting of the “Party Council.” The Party Council was a new advisory institution of the CPA created by the 1922 Bridgman Convention,

composed of the CEC with the organization's District Organizers. This Expanded CEC was intended to meet quarterly to plot the party's strategic direction, and this is just what it seems to have done in December 1922. This seminal statement, written around the time of the new year and signed by CPA Executive Secretary Abram Jakira, is mercilessly self-critical. On the one hand, open activities were "a success politically" (LDC Defense campaign), "politically a big success" (WPA Labor Party campaign), and "politically a tremendous success" (TUEL Union Amalgamation campaign); yet, for all this promising activity "we had a fearful failure, for, as we could not mobilize our Party forces." Jakira continues: "In a word: in the defense, Labor Party, and amalgamation campaigns, there was every possibility of good political success, but very great, even destructive failure from an organizational standpoint.... The CEC feels compelled to enlighten the Party members on these questions with perfect frankness. We declare most emphatically that organizationally our Party has been a failure, so that now we must issue the slogan: 'BUILD THE PARTY.'" The "entire political administration and the whole political work" of the Workers Party had been Communist, it had adopted a sound Communist program and was now affiliated with the Communist International. In contrast, the underground party's apparatus is deemed "too cumbersome," with primary party units "removed too many steps from the CEC" resulting in a chronic inability to mobilize. Further, these primary party units had withered: "Our groups are too small. Group meetings have degenerated, and it is a most rare event when a full meeting occurs." While not administering the kill shot to the parallel underground organization, it is clear from this document that by Jan. 1, 1923, even Executive Secretary Jakira was aware of its grave deficiencies in the emerging political situation. A plan for restructuring the underground apparatus, reducing a subdivision and building the numerical size of the underground party is proposed here; but as 1923 dawned, the underground CPA was clearly headed for the rocks.